THE
MYSTERY OF THE AGES
CONTAINED IN THE
SECRET DOCTRINE OF ALL RELIGIONS.

THIRD EDITION.

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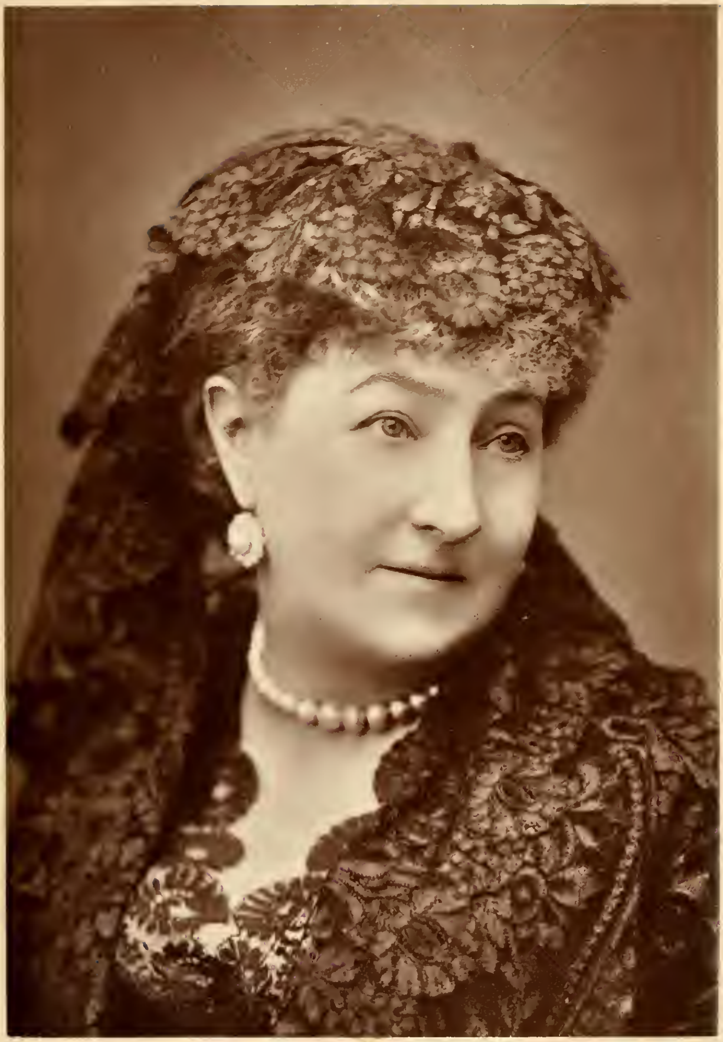

Madam Blavatsky.

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THE
MYSTERY OF THE AGES

CONTAINED IN THE

Secret Doctrine of all Religions.

(THIRD EDITION.)

BY

MARIE, COUNTESS OF CAITHNESS,
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"OLD TRUTHS IN A NEW LIGHT," ETC., ETC.

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PREFACE.

WHEN Hiero, the tyrant of Syracuse, once proposed to the philosopher Simonides the question: What is God? the latter desired a day to consider it. Being asked the same question the next day, he desired two days for that purpose, and thus from time to time doubled the number. Hiero, being greatly surprised at this, inquired the reason of his conduct. "Because," said Simonides, "the longer I consider the subject, the more obscure it seems to be."

"Should you now ask of me this same question," says Cicero, in his dissertation *De Natura Deorum*, 'On the Nature of the Gods,' "I will reply to you as Simonides did to the tyrant of Syracuse; and I am disposed to believe," he continues, "that Simonides, who was not only an excellent poet, but also was neither wanting in erudition nor in good sense, after his mind had followed opinion after opinion, one more subtle than the other, without being able to discern which were true, finally lost all hope of finding Truth."

Thus far the learned of old. Uninspired reason, it would appear, cannot attain to a knowledge of the Divine; and if this was the state of mind of the great Roman orator when he wrote his treatise *On the Nature of the Gods*, well might an average Roman of that period exclaim: What is Truth? while Truth incarnate stood before him.

To ask what is Truth is but to ask what is God; for God is the essence of Truth, and Truth is the essence of God. The knowledge of truth is therefore the knowledge of God, even as the knowledge of God must be a knowledge of the Divine and omnipotent Truth that sustains the Universe. Truth-knowledge and God-knowledge must be identical, for it is impossible to conceive a truth opposed to the Divine All-Truth, even as it is inconceivable that God could be opposed to our knowledge of a Truth whereto our Soul urges us to seek. Truth and God being one, the knowledge of that Truth which is God and of God, who is the Truth, is the Divine Wisdom of the Ages, and the Religion connected therewith is the Religion of Wisdom.

This Esoteric Wisdom, ever jealously guarded by Initiates, the writer, by a course of studies which became both a consolation and a recreation, has been able to trace in most Religions, and herewith presents the results of those investigations in a collected form. Although these studies cannot equal the researches of a man who can devote his life to the subject, yet being thus far in the favoured position of having had all kinds of views providentially presented, it is thought that at least a one-sided exposition has been avoided, and the reader will get a truly catholic—that is, a universal—idea of what the Secret Doctrine really is, which has been kept concealed from the beginning.

In this age a universal inquiry into all religious systems is carried on around us by kindred spirits, clearly indicating that it is the age of revealment, or of making known. The sacred books of every land and age are being translated, and their merits discussed; imperfectly, no doubt, at present; but let us not despair, for others shall follow the path to esoteric knowledge that we have but intuitionally indicated. What has been kept secret from the beginning is now made manifest; and although the less liberal ecclesiastics, inspired by fear for the safety of their sheltering church, still strive to obscure the divine light emanating from what they are pleased to call pagan sources, who is there that can now believe, for instance, that the teachings of Gotama Buddha were inspired by Satan simply because they anticipated those of Christ Jesus?

Virtue is divine by whoever it may be taught and practised, and no sect can claim a monopoly of goodness, or to have originated a virtue that was not known and practised long anterior to the existence of that sect. God is Truth, and was known from the beginning. Man stood ever in the same relationship to his Divine Father. To say: "other religions may have been good, but mine is the best," is but to assert: "other men may have been good, but I am the best." For the religion is the man himself, and his highest ideal. If that ideal is imperfect, the whole man is imperfect; if wrong and false, the whole man is wrong and false, and becomes the very reverse of his pretensions. Therefore, to assume: "all religions except mine are bad," is but to declare: "all men are devils, I only am an angel," and is the height of egotistical presumption. The Truth of the Heathen is as true to him as the Truth of the Christian; for Truth is its own law, and its Divine Spirit knows no sectarian distinctions. Some of these are more liberal-minded than we are, when they say: "Though we may each look out of different windows, we all see the same great Sun—source of light and warmth."

The occult Theo-philosophy set forth in these pages is not a new invention, nor the mystic craze of a few visionaries, as irresponsibly-minded Agnostics and the *soi-disant* Orthodox would fain describe it, but the continuance of the most ancient Divine Wisdom-Religion co-eternal with the existence of the Divine Soul. For wherever the Soul was, there was the Law and Way of re-birth and re-ascension.

To whom shall we now turn for information on this mystic knowledge?

The ordinary religionists, depending for their knowledge of the Divine upon the Sunday sermon, which but too often is given by one who is *only* a Theologian, and who consequently teaches but what he has been taught by those who knew as little as he himself knows of the inner truth, can afford us no reply. The words of the Word are only incidentally produced in as far as these can be twisted to agree with a mass of arbitrary dogmas, that, like parasitical creepers, overgrow and conceal the tree of life from our views.

Nor can the atheistic Materialists—or, as they prefer to be called, "Agnostics,"—tell us that which they themselves do not know. These would rather enslave all mankind with the bonds of their own wilful ignorance, to compel the debasing belief that not only God but even a life beyond the grave are subjects hopelessly unknowable. How gladly would the Materialists stamp out the ideas of God and Immortality and erase the words from the Dictionary! For to admit a knowledge beyond their comprehension is to resign their pretensions to positive science; and rather than accept the reality of a spiritual knowledge, which they by their perversity are incapable of acquiring, they would willingly, to uphold their own prestige, condemn all mankind to spiritual blindness.

Therefore must Theosophists submit to be called visionaries, and Theosophy remain a tabooed subject; and with characteristic forgetfulness they, whose predecessors but a century ago were crushed by the intolerance of ecclesiastic bigotry, would now set up a system of pseudo-scientific infallibility, from which, according to them, it is not only heresy, but insanity, to differ. Such is the modesty of the Agnostics, or know-nothings, that they do not hesitate to say that Spiritualists and *proh pudor* Theosophists cannot possibly be right-minded; for are not they, the Materialists, the absolute authorities for all Science, and have not they the sole monoply of reason? To hear them discourse one would be inclined to believe that all the knowledge in the world is already their own; yet the Gospel of their Unfaith amounts only to this: there is no God, and the Agnostic is his prophet. This No-God, however, does not increase our knowledge of the unknown laws of nature, and, having not even an existence, his poor nothingness can afford us but small consolation.

What justification have such men, vain of that little knowledge known to be a dangerous thing—what justification have they to consider those deluded who differ from them because they preach the Unknown God? The greatest madman is the Atheist; for can he be otherwise than insane who denies the existence of that omnipotent All-Reason whose manifestation is the Universe?

Wiser than the moderns with their ephemeral science were the ancients, who more concealed than revealed their spiritual knowledge.

Seeking the Truth therefore, neither in unbelief nor in blind belief, neither lightly condemning nor lightly believing, by following the self-constituted authorities of credulity or incredulity, but accepting Truth wherever it is found, and giving credit to all for the knowledge that they really possess, we have arrived at the conclusion, which the impartial reader is at liberty to accept or reject, that in antiquity, as well as in more recent times, there were beings claiming to have a knowledge of the Divine, that they attained to this knowledge by practising virtue, and whether their claims are justifiable can be discerned from a perusal of this our Inquiry, wherein we also indicate the works that will aid the reader desirous for further information.

Truths that we already know become not more valuable because we find them accepted by a multitude of witnesses, or garbed in outlandish jargon; but sometimes the very familiarity with a Truth that has been inculcated to us from early youth prevents us from appreciating its value and perceiving its importance upon which a new wording often throws new light and displays the jewel that has been all the while overlooked.

Our investigations have been carried on in accordance with the rules Bishop Beveridge (1636—1707) laid down for himself, in his *Private Thoughts on Religion*, Part I., Article 2, and whose remarks are prefixed to the first volume of the *Sacred Books of the East*:—

"The general inclinations which are naturally implanted in my soul to some religion, it is impossible for me to shift off: but there being such a multiplicity of religions in the world, I desire now seriously to consider with myself which of them all to restrain these my general inclinations to. And the reason of this my inquiry is not that I am in the least dissatisfied with that religion I have already embraced, but because it is natural for all men to have an overbearing opinion and esteem for that particular religion they are born and bred up in. That, therefore, I may not seem biassed by the prejudice of education, I am resolved to prove and examine them all; that I may see and hold fast to that which is best. . . . .

"Indeed there was never any religion so barbarous and diabolical but it was preferred before all other religions whatsoever by them that did profess it; otherwise they would not have professed it. . . . .

"And why, say they, may not you be mistaken as well as we? Especially when there is, at least, six to one against your Christian religion; all of which think they serve God aright, and expect happiness thereby as well as you. . . . And hence it is that my looking for the truest religion, being conscious to myself how great an ascendant Christianity holds over me beyond the rest, as being that religion whereinto I was born and baptized; that which the supreme authority has enjoined and my parents educated me in; that which everyone I meet withal highly approves of, and which I myself have, by a long-continued profession, made almost natural to me: I am resolved to be more jealous and suspicious of this religion than of the rest, and be sure not to entertain it any longer without being convinced by solid and substantial arguments of the truth and certainty of it. That, therefore, I may make diligent and impartial inquiry into all religions, and so be sure to find out the best, I shall, for a time, look upon myself as one not at all interested in any particular religion whatsoever, much less in the Christian religion; but only as one who desires, in general, to serve and obey Him that made me in a right manner, and thereby to be made partaker of that happiness my nature is capable of."

Having carried on our investigations in this very spirit, we now declare to have found in the Esoteric Doctrine, or Universal Wisdom-Religion, which forms the secret Doctrine of all religions, the solution to that mystery of the ages which satisfies both the aspirations of the Soul and Intellect.

This Secret Doctrine, which we have found to be the Esoteric basis or foundation of all the religions, we have been able to study, and which we have therefore named Universal, is sometimes known as the Ancient Wisdom-Religion, which derives its name from the Divine Wisdom Itself, of which we read so much in the Proverbs of Solomon, and in the Book of Ecclesiastes, and which is so evidently shown forth as being the *feminine* principle in the Divinity.

To quote from Swedenborg—in whose writings we find this theory so clearly set forth—"Love and Wisdom are the two Essential Principles in the Divinity"; in speaking separately of either, it is customary to say, "The Divine Love," or "The Divine Wisdom." They represent the Masculine and Feminine sides of the Great First Cause, whom we call God, or the Divine BEING, for God alone IS.

Reason comprehends that where there is Being, or ESSE, there is also EXISTERE; one is not possible without the other, for an Esse is not an Esse unless it exists, because it is not in a form; and what is not in a form, either spiritual or natural, has no quality—is nothing. Whatever exists from an Esse makes one with the Esse. Now, this is the case with the Divine Love and Wisdom. These two are so much *One* that they may be distinguished in thought, but not in act; they may therefore be said to be *distinctly* One—that is to say, Biune, or Two in One.

The Divine Spirit of God-man is understood by the Divine Love (Esse), and His Divine Soul by Wisdom

(Existere); they are *distinctly* One, since Divine Wisdom exists from Love, and Divine Love makes itself seen and known by Wisdom.

All that proceeds from Divine Wisdom is called TRUTH.

"*The Truth*," then, is no other than the *form* of the affection which is engendered by the Divine Love. For this *reason* the Lord Jesus Christ is called the *Only Begotten* Son of God, although the Churches may not be aware of this spiritual interpretation, or inclined to *reason* concerning it. But Jesus himself declared it before the Judgment Seat of Pilate. "*Thou sayest that I am King. To this end was I born, and for this reason came I into the world, that I should bear witness to the Truth. Everyone who is of the truth heareth my voice.*"

Let us not then turn a deaf ear to this voice, in our search after TRUTH; for by listening to it we may be directed to find the fundamental Truth underlying all the religions of the Ages; and as Christ himself said: "Your Father Abraham rejoiced to see my day"; which the Jews could not at all understand when they looked upon a man who was "*not more than thirty years old*"; for they were as limited then in their Spiritual views as we are now, to whom the same Christ is speaking nearly two thousand years later; but we can still only see the historical *man*, who laid down his life to bear witness to the Truth at the age of 33, and not THE TRUTH to which he came to bear witness, which he manifested to the world, and which belongs to spiritual light, or insight; "*that light which shineth in darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not*"; the Only *Begotten* Son of God, Born of the DIVINE WISDOM, whom the Lord possessed in the beginning, before ever the earth was. (Read the VIII. Chapter of Wisdom.)

But to avoid repeating this formula, we prefer to adopt an expressive word derived from the Greek, or, rather, from two Greek words—*Theo*, God, and *Sophia*, Wisdom—which together, as "Theosophia," or, in English, "Theosophy," means the *Science of "Divine Wisdom"*; and though we can never hope to know this in its fulness, yet we may certainly quench our thirst at the ever-flowing fountain; for it is that source of which Christ said: "*If any man drink, it shall be to him a well of water springing up into Eternal life.*"

This divine science has been known in all ages, and by the followers of many different systems of religion, because it is the oldest science there is in the world; though the outward name has been adopted by an extensive organization, inaugurated in India, with which it has perhaps become rather too exclusively identified of late, as Branches of this Society or Brotherhood are extended in all directions, not only over all India, but exist also in Europe and America; this Society, however, makes no claim to the exclusive use of the term, and its members are quite aware that there are many Theosophists in the world, belonging to all religions, although they do not outwardly bear that name. We cannot suppose, therefore, that a narrow, prejudiced *party-spirit* will prevent any large-minded reader from following us through this earnest inquiry we have endeavoured to make concerning the DIVINE WISDOM, or Theosophy, underlying all the Religions of the Ages.

We are told that the disciples of Jesus were indignant because they saw someone casting out devils by the same power or Name, who followed not them: but Jesus replied: "*Forbid them not, for he that is not against us is on our part.*" This is the first lesson to be learned by every true Theosophist; for to be a Theosophist, you must rise to the height of view that finds the underlying truth in every system.

The Study and Science of the Priests of all religions is THEOLOGY—and Theology, as well as Theosophy, may also be dignified as a Divine Science, because it is the study of God and the Scripture—or, so called, Sacred Writings; but whilst Theology affirms the knowledge of God to be inaccessible to Reason, and only attainable through Faith, which is a gift of God, Theosophy affirms the intellectual and intuitional apprehension of divine things, and declares that God is to be seen in all His works, and is still more particularly to be found and understood by the investigation and study of the Occult laws of nature, whilst keeping clear, however, of *Theurgy*, a study which might end by leading the student in an opposite direction.

"Theosophy professes to exclude all dialectical proofs (which is the method employed by Theology and by Philosophy), and to derive its knowledge of God from direct and immediate intuition and contemplation, or from the immediate intuition—communication—of God Himself. So far, therefore, as regards the Science of God, Theosophy is but another name for *Mysticism*, although the latter name implies much more, and the direct and immediate knowledge or intuition of God to which the mystics lay claim, was in fact the foundation of that intimate union with God, and consequent abstraction from outer things, which they made the basis of their moral and ascetical system" (Chambers' Encyclopædia).

If, then, it be true, as it is thus implied by a generally received authority, that mysticism is the Soul's inner knowledge of God, may we not define Theosophy as the Science that cultivates the spiritual perceptions and faculties of the Soul, and thus helps it to unfold that intuitional knowledge which, as a divine seed, is already planted in that precious garden?

The mission of man is to learn to know God as far as He can be known; but as long as we are worshippers of the external God only, we are idolators and creedmongers, and are led mechanically, like sheep, through our own indifference in neglecting to cultivate the interior faculties of our souls.

The Soul is the One little Garden given by our heavenly Father to each one of His children in particular, and which, were we to cultivate, tend, and care for, as we do our outer earthly bodies, would richly reward us by the fragrance and beauty of the flowers and rare fruits it would put forth, and which would bloom and flourish in its fruitful soil.

If we realize what Soul is, we realize what Theosophy is. The infinitude of God cannot be made known to us in words, it must be acquired in the infinite region—the region of the Soul. The carnal mind cannot apprehend Spiritual Truth. Above the realm of the senses and passions, out of the noise into the silence must he go who would find the truth. "Be still, and *know* that I am God."

The Soul of man is a mirror in nature, and the mind may read the lessons written there in the lurid fires of passion, or in the clear light of eternity. If the mirror of the Soul be turned habitually towards the spiritual world—if passion be subdued, and pride destroyed, the mists will roll away, and knowledge of everlasting verities will flow into the Soul.

"Theosophy is the Divine Wisdom which is the science of divine bliss; it is the science of contemplating problems that lie deep in man's spiritual nature. . . . . This great Science is the Science of Eternal Life; the contemplation of which causes the present life to assume its true proportions.

"Theosophy is the essence of all doctrines, the inner truth of all religions. Creedless, nameless, untaught by priests, because it is of the Spirit and not to be found in temple or synagogue. It is the still small voice heard in the whirlwind, and felt in the storm."

Theosophy believes in the still small Voice of God within, or the Spirit within the Soul. God is Spirit, and Spirit is One, Infinite and Eternal, whether it speak through the life of Buddha or Jesus, Zoroaster or Mohammed.

The words Jesus spoke, and the works He performed, he spoke and wrought through the Spirit, or the God within his own Spiritual Soul. And whoever lives in the Spirit bears the same witness. The truths of the Spirit are only known by the Spirit. When we walk in the light of the Intellect alone, and without the Intuition, these things are foolishness unto us, because they are intuitionally discerned by the Soul, and it is only after they have been first discerned that they can become understood by the intellect.

The ideal of the Theosophist is the At-one-ment of his own spirit with that of the Infinite, and to be able to say with Jesus, "*The Father and I are one.*" The Theosophist sees that this is the essential teaching of all religions, and to obtain and enjoy this union you must believe in and obey the voice of your own higher conscience; for the true Christ is the Divine Spirit within you, and thus God manifest in humanity.

All truly-inspired men, as well as Jesus himself, advance the claim of their unity with God. The sense in which Jesus meant this is revealed when he said: "*It is written ye are Gods.*" The spirit of man is part of the breath of God. When man comes to a true knowledge of himself, he also comes to a true knowledge of God, and from being *the son of man*, he feels he can say with Jesus, "*I am the Son of God.*" "*I and my Father are one.*" And though on earth he suffers and dies, yet angels minister to him, and death is but the entrance into a larger, fuller, and more perfect life.

When we attain to this exalted state the Immanuel of the heart, *or God with us*, the Christ born within us, will work mighty works, and redeem us from the world and the flesh, and make us conscious of our own relation to God, and our heirdom of Eternal life.

To be a true Theosophist, or lover of DIVINE WISDOM, we must have largeness of heart to embrace the whole; therefore a heart attuned to divine melodies; or, in other words, a spirit that feels and thrills to the glorious harmonies of all that comes to us so bountifully from the DIVINE LOVE AND WISDOM of our Heavenly FATHER AND MOTHER GOD, and keenly alive to all the beauties that surround us on every side, as well as to all the dangers to which we are continually exposed, and from which we are only saved by their ever-watchful and merciful providence for the safety of all.

True Theosophy studies all religions, but teaches none, leaving to each the right of finding TRUTH for himself. Nevertheless, it is the summary of the Wisdom of the Brahmin, of the Buddhist, of the Jew, and also of the Christian; for it is that branch of Christianity which demonstrates and distinguishes the Spiritual Christ from the historical Christ, too exclusively taught by Theology.

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UNIVERSAL THEOSOPHY.

The word THEO-SOPHIA, according to Plato, signifies "Divine Wisdom." It is therefore that Wisdom which is from above, and which will lead the Soul from earth to heaven ; from animalism to Divinity. Its study begets immortality by bridging the gulf between life and death ; whilst *it alone* enables man to feel that divine love which is the supreme good, and the manifestation of the Eternal in his own being.

CHAPTER I.

INTRODUCTORY.

AT the outset of our enquiry into Theosophy and the Occult we are confronted with the most momentous questions.

Is there a Supreme Principle commonly designated God? Can God be known? And how is the God-knowing faculty acquired?

The magnitude of these questions renders them unapproachable in their entirety by the human mind. Then to whom shall we turn for an answer?

In Physical Science information is not accepted by reason of belief, or of unbelief; and in the Spiritual Science of Theosophy, both the credulous dogmatist and the incredulous agnostic should also be deemed equally incompetent, and the subject should be treated from a stand-point of neither belief nor unbelief, but simply as experimental Gnosticism, or Science illustrated by historical examples, and guided by individual research.

Verily, we consider ourselves the least learned in Theosophy, but what little we know, we *do know*. Yet most humbly and diffidently do we take up so ponderous a subject, even the more so as each of those colossal systems which we can but point out and pass by, demands the study of a life-time to be rightly understood and valued. The following pages may therefore only be judged of as a mere attempt to induce others who are more qualified than ourselves to enlighten students of the Occult with their illumination.

Theosophy we consider to be the knowledge of the Deific, the Supreme and Eternal Principle.

But what do we mean by a Supreme Principle? Is it that which John Henry Newman defines as the "Supreme Being" in the following language, and in reply to this very question?

> "I mean, then, by the Supreme Being, one who is simply self-dependent, and the only Being who is such; moreover, that He is without beginning, or eternal; that in consequence He has lived a whole eternity by Himself, and hence that He is all-sufficient, sufficient for His own blessedness, and all-blessed, and ever-blessed. Further, I mean a Being who, having these prerogatives, has the supreme Good, or rather is the Supreme Good, or has all the attributes of Good in infinite intenseness; all wisdom, all truth, all justice, all love, all holiness, all beautifulness; who is omnipotent, omniscient, omnipresent; ineffably one, absolutely perfect; and such that we do not know and cannot even imagine of Him, is far more wonderful than what we do and can. I mean, moreover, that He created all things out of nothing, and preserves them every moment, and could destroy them as easily as He made them;

> and that in consequence He is separated from them by an abyss; and is incommunicable in all His attributes. And farther, He has stamped upon all things, in the hour of their creation, their respective nature, and has given them their work and mission, and their length of days, greater or less, in their appointed place. I mean, too, that He is ever present with His works, one by one, and confronts everything He has made by His particular and most loving Providence, and manifests Himself to each according to its needs; and has on rational beings imprinted the moral law and given them the duty of worship and service, searching and scanning them through and through with His omniscient eye, and putting before them a present trial and a judgment to come."

Far more inclined do we feel to adopt the inspired definition of Mr. James MacDowell, of Glasgow, in his papers on "Spiritual Science and the Fourth Dimension," who, when contemplating the glory of the starry heavens, exclaims:—

> "Here we feel the hand of the Lord is upon us, and like the prophet's servant of old, our eyes are opened to a still more glorious sight. Suddenly the whole universe of space bursts into a blaze of glory like ten thousand noondays, and with unutterable awe and reverence we perceive that the whole Stellar Universe of Suns, Planets and Satellites are whirling their joyous waltz of times and periods *within* a Sun whose diameter is measured by Infinity and its period by Eternity.
>
> "This is our Divine mother, the bride of God. Her being tremulous with love and joy—teeming from her prolific womb His myriad myriad sons and daughters—but where is God?—Within every point of our Divine mother—'the same yesterday, to-day, and for ever' unmoved, through her, He moveth all."

There is far more mystic thought in this conception of the Deity than in the former which, however ably defined, neither satisfies the head nor comforts the heart.

We must uphold the Kabbalistic doctrine of *ex nihilo nihil fit*, and deny the possibility of the Creator destroying His own creation, for to destroy would mean to have failed with that particular object; while an absolute power, emanating from an absolute intelligence, can never fail to accomplish its object in every item. We must deny a totally "irresponsible" Deity, and affirm God to be the Supreme Responsibility; and although the Infinite and the Absolute may be considered to have no relation to the finite, and the conditioned, we can become more and more Divine only in so far as we recognise our responsibility. Mr. Newman's "abyss of separation" contradicts the Apostle Paul, who says that "in God we live and move, and have our being," God not merely confronts His works but lives in them. Nature is not God, but God is latent in the whole of nature, and lives in every atom of the ever-changing eternal cosmos.

In every age, and among every nation, not totally lapsed in barbarism, we find there were those who affirmed with the utmost emphasis that God *is*, that man can *know* God, that he can acquire this knowledge by a pure and holy life, and that this Divine experience is the Supreme Good—THEOSOPHIA,—or the Divine Knowledge.

These beings have borne witness, even unto death, and laid down their lives heroically. Every age, every nation has had its "Martyrs" or "Witnesses" for the Divine Truth; every age, every nation has more neglected than respected these Witnesses, even as Truth herself was, and is, passed by unheeded by the multitude.

Shall it be for ever thus? Are we indeed in this century of boasted civilisation and enlightenment no farther advanced than in times of a semi-barbaric past, or have we even retrogaded? How slowly does progress progress! What a delusion is our vaunted Physical Science when the origin, the object, and destiny, of all things are unknown, and nothing remains for our consolation but a limited register of dry facts, a few fanciful theories of more or less ingenious fallacies, containing nothing positive, but displaying rank ignorance of the Absolute.

Shall it be for ever thus? Are we to be totally denied the possibility of any higher Sciences than those inculcated in our Schools and Universities? True, they demand much trouble to learn, and more to *un*learn, and are only worthy to be forgotten, as, beyond mathematics, they can teach us nothing absolute.

You may deny the Soul her aspirations, nevertheless she will aspire; if you bar the way to Heaven by denying its existence, the Soul will make her Heaven in Hell. If goodness is a delusion and conscience means merely education, the Soul will cry with Lucifer, "Evil, be thou my Good," and bursting the bonds of her rational self will let loose the very Hells of irrationality. For even as Heaven is within us, so is Hell; and where the Dominion of God is denied, Satan rules unasked.

God-denying is the cause of Satan's kingdom, or Hell coming on Earth. Modern Science, like another Frankenstein, has in Atheism created a monster which it is unable to master and whereby not only Modern Science herself, but all civilisation will be crushed unless a higher power steps in.

Is Theosophy that higher power? Theosophy has been the Saviour of all ages, why not of the present? It is not Gotama, not Plato, not Jesus, not Lao, but Theosophy, the Divine Knowledge experienced and taught by these exalted individuals, that is the Buddha, the Logos, the Christ, the Tao. When Gotama found Nirvana, when Plato found the Logos, when Jesus found the Kingdom of Heaven, when Lao-Tse found Tao (all these being but different in name, for one identical thing—the manifestation of the Divine Spirit), they became Illuminati—God-inspired teachers, true Theosophists; but had they not found that Supreme Good, and Revelation of the Absolute in their own being, they would have been but ordinary men.

As it was then, so it is now, darkness when most dense shall be dissipated, and the light of the Soul shineth, though the darkness of the mind comprehendeth it not.

Theosophy, the *Divine Knowledge* or God-wisdom, is both Saviour and Salvation. A system combining boundless faith with mathematical exactitude. It is the Eternal Yea, and there can be no Eternal Nay, no positive negation can pose itself beside an absolute affirmation. One affirmation of Science outweighs the countless negations of nescience. If there is a Positive Science of God there can be no Positive Science of "No-God." Where there is an Absolute affirmation there can only remain a confession of ignorance of that Absolute fact; but no no-fact can be opposed to it.

Negation of a thing one does not know is merely a confession of ignorance of the possibility of the affirmation. Not to have seen a thing is no evidence of its non-existence, but only that he who has not seen it, has not seen it, yet the thing may nevertheless exist. Such a *thing* is the "God-idea," as some are pleased to call it. Those who *deny* the ubiquitous Presence go altogether beyond the domain of their experience, for they can only affirm that by a wilfully perverse exercise of their incomplete and undeveloped faculties, they believe to have succeeded in excluding the Deity from their minds, and to have consequently arrived at a state of mind that is adverse to the reception of Divine Truth; but they cannot affirm that the Deific Principle has no existence, for they have not attained to a standpoint like the true Theosophist, where they would be competent to make an Absolute affirmation.

Negation which may be called the shadow of affirmation, just as the demon is said to be the shadow of the Divine, having been shown to be not absolute; Scepticism is even less absolute than negation, for it is weakness, not strength, merely a reaction of blind belief to blind unbelief, and all the doubt in the world cannot produce one absolute affirmation, for weakness combined is not strength, but combined weakness: a rope of cobwebs is as nothing to a steel blade.

Whether the Sceptic doubts even his own Scepticism or not, his conceptions are so totally devoid of reality and positiveness that they cannot stand before an affirmation of *The Absolute.*

If we suppose there is no Deity, then this "No-God" idea is even more wonderful than the existence assumed for the Absolute Being; and far from doing away with the inexplicability of existence, this assumption increases it in many ways to an incalculable degree. If God is merely an abstract expression for a sum-total of ignorance among the uninitiated, the "No-God" is just as well a multiplication to infinitude of the same sum of ignorance, given a newly-invented expression to hide by sound the vacuity of thought among the pseudo-scientific. Whatever that ontological concept may be called, which is made to account for everything, and which keeps the worlds in their course, be it Force, Ether, Electricity, Matter, or Nothing, it is merely old ignorance newly labelled with a grand, empty name. If Atheists have no belief in the one Presence, which is an absolute fact to all true Theosophists, how can we be expected to believe in the "No-God" of whom they know nothing?

As long as people merely quibble about the words "God" or "No-God," they are only exchanging emblems of ignorance; but when we come to Absolute Truth and Principles, God is all that *is*, and His existence is an absolute necessity. The cant of belief has generated a cant of unbelief, but true knowledge is alike opposed to both belief and unbelief.

If the existence of a Supreme Principle of Absolute Thought, Power, Justice, and Love, does not satisfy the spoilt children of Modern Science, is the absence or the non-existence of God more satisfactory, and does it help them out of the maze of the problems of existence? If they are satisfied that the parts are living and intelligent, and the whole is dead and devoid of thought, they thereby expose but their own deadness and unintelligence, and it will be useless to argue any further with such.

He who finds not the Divinity in his own Soul may seek God in vain in the entire Universe, yet even the mechanical mathematics of the Solar systems may recall God to one who ignores the psychical mathematics of his own Soular system.

If there is a God for and in us, the Deity is not buried in a hoary Past, nor concealed in a remote Future, but is the God of an eternal Present, and ubiquitous Presence.

The historical manifestations of the Deity are only examples for us to follow, but not idols for us to worship. God is not something strange to, and apart from, our Being, but is the very essence and core of it, not of the artificial Non-Being, that by sensualism and Self-Will we have agglomerated around us, but of the real Eternal Being in its purity. If we can but arrive at the source of our Being we find the God-head to be the fountainhead.

The wisest, greatest, holiest, and most truthful of mankind affirm, and speak from individual experience, that God *is*, that the Deific Principle dwelleth in the Soul, that the Soul is eternal, that the manifestation of the Soul is the manifestation of the Absolute. An enumeration of names is not necessary. Initiates know we allude to the World-Teachers, who have served as media between Deity and man. However their views of the Infinite may verbally differ when interpreted in the spirit of true Theosophy, emanating from an individual Gnosis or spiritual initiation, these exalted ones are, by their knowledge, found to be in perfect harmony upon the Divine verities concerning the Soul, and the Path to be pursued to attain to Soul Science. Can we feel anything else but sincere pity for those who would make the negation, which is generated by ignorance, appear as an outcome of Science?

We do not intend to await nor to anticipate the verdict of posterity, but without heeding the raillery of materialism, we affirm that we can and will think for ourselves, and that we are not content with the empty sounds that in modern Science (and also in so-called Orthodox Religion) pass as counters for thoughts; and in the following pages we shall attempt to place the simple facts before the impartial reader of whom we demand a hearing on behalf of Theosophy, that neglected and rejected Saviour of Humanity.

However various race or creed, however different ethnical conditions and social surroundings, however ill-advised the educational, mis-educational, or non-educational efforts, to which each individual is subjected, however unfavourable hereditary predispositions, nevertheless the impulse, striving, and inclination of the human Being is on the whole for Good; and evil is only done because man, in his ignorance, hopes to get some Good out of it.

Evil is not a thing that *is*, not a thing of Eternity. There is no Evil principle in man but selfishness, derived from ignorance, and this is merely a temporary and transitional stage of imperfection, a kind of insanity, an irrational state which has no permanence before the Eternal Reason. These stages of imperfection man outgrows but slowly, but then, he is a Being of Eternity.

Considering all the details of imperfection that are forced upon us by our surroundings, it is wonderful, not that there should be so much variety, but that there should be any unity of thought; and when we find that the unity is on the side of any one particular idea, and that idea expressed as a positive fact, an absolute experience, and given, moreover, by men of the very highest moral character, yea, by those to whom we owe the very Science of morals, and who were, and are, the living standards of morality, then, even as Law is the agreement of competent legislators and not the disagreement of the multitude, who are only bound by a common tie of ignorance, the evidence of the God-knowers should be considered as conclusive.

The unity of Esoteric doctrine is a great proof of its truth. The Theosophy of all nations is identically the same. It is Soul Science, God Science. Where it is mixed with human inventions, be they originated by embodied or disembodied beings, it is in the same degree fallible and erroneous. For there is but one Truth, one Good, one Absolute, and that is God. And if we are to point to one book of positive and unadulterated Truth, it cannot be the Bible, nor the Vedas, nor the Tripitaka, nor the Avesta, nor any of the books held sacred by peoples and tribes, nor any of the writings of the Mystics, for these are all, even though in some it be but, in an infinitesimal degree, mixed with human non-absolute concepts. There is but one book that could prove the reality of an Absolute Truth, and that is, the Elements of Euclid. Not that we deny that Poets and Seers are inspired, but that their inspiration does not come always direct from the Absolute.

The ancient Greek Initiates knew only too well that without exactitude there could be no true Science of God, and all neophytes had with them to pass through probationary classes, where a system of mathematics was taught, of which modern mathematicians have no conception; for if modern and ancient mathematics were identical, how is it that not one of the modern mathematicians has yet been able to supply, out of his own mind, the lost books of Euclid? (asserted by Isaac Barrow to be complete!) There was a Theosophical secret in ancient mathematics, of which no modern (except perhaps the late Thomas Taylor) has any idea. Mathematics were to the ancients simply a mode of Theosophy. The object of the system of psychic mathematics, inculcated by the Pythagoreans, the Platonists, and other Hellenic schools, was similar to that aimed at by Yogis, Ssufis, Kabbalists, and other Theosophists in their Occult practice. It was concentration of thought upon transcendental objects.

Depraved man is decentralised, his centre is a gross body, the lower-self and all his feelings and passions are pointed to that low and unreal state of being. To bring the neophyte away from his lower self, the thoughts had to be isolated; and while in the East, Yoga was considered the chief Theosophic practice, the West, in the time of the Alexandrian School, had so perfected a system of mathematical Theosophy, or rather, had made so exact a system of Theosophic mathematics, that Ammonios Saccas, Plotinos, Proclos, Synesios and others, attained by its sole aid all the results claimed by Adepts. The "Commentaries of Proclos on the first book of Euclid's Elements," form a valuable fragment of that profound system of Occult Philosophy.

Thought is also Prayer. He who thinks prays, and one who would disdain the Spiritual exercises of St. Ignatius, may respect the transcendental exercises of the Platonists. Those who reject the Bible may respect Euclid, those who decline to pray may not object to think. We Theosophists or Students of Divine Wisdom, like that all-pervading Divine Principle, reject none, except those who reject themselves. But by whatever exercise it be, that of the Seraph or the Cherub, of intellect or love, the mind must be purified and drawn off from the material earth in order to become a citizen of Heaven.

Man first exists in this world, as a self-volitional, semi-conscious Being. The greatest part of his life is unconsciously and involitionally manipulated for him by a Being which verily is *within* him, yet over which he has not the slightest control! However man may strive against it, the Involitional, or the "UNCONSCIOUS" (as Modern Philosophy phrases it), is his absolute master, and his imperfect Will cannot cope with it, although he can so persistently stifle it, as lastingly to injure his human and his Divine self. This Being, which is the centre of Being, is the latent "*I am*," the life and growth principle within, the Real, Eternal and Absolute Self, which, by its restless and sleepless activity, foreshadows the Divine activity, and the Omniscient and Omnipotent ubiquity.

It is difficult to explain this "Being," which is indeed *our* very highest self, and not another, for it is the Eternal Essence individuating itself in us. It is the Eternal Being, the latent *I*, the Divine Principle within us. But before the Light can shine, the opposing shell must be destroyed, before the God can be born, the demon must die, and Hell must be passed through before Heaven can be entered; for Hell is eternal, but man is not eternally in Hell.

The Human Spirit is Divine Spirit, but with a demonic shell about it derived from materiality. Cast off the opposing shell, and you become what you were before you entered upon the fallen state of a selfish and sensually perverted phase of existence. The depraved sensual *Self*-Will is the ever delusive hindrance preventing the manifestation of the Divine and Absolute Will.

Let this sensual Self-Will, which is the Demon, be annihilated, and the Divine Soul can be born within us; and our Being is identical with the Infinite, the Absolute Good.

There can be but One Divine Will, One Good, One

Absolute, One God, and as long as we are external to that One, we are not in our true eternal Being, not Divine, not good, not Absolute, not rational even, but deluded, erroneous, and irrational; therefore necessarily demonic, evil, erring, and false, both to ourselves and to God.

While in the human state, the Divine Being at times manifests Itself in us, as a warning voice; it is the cause of prophetic dreaming, prescience, intuition, and the yearning for the Mystical and unknown, which is merely a sensing of the Divine. It really is *a* Being, or rather *the* Being—yea, pure Thought, Love, Life. A Law unto Itself, the Law of all Law, human and Divine, temporal and eternal. It *is*, and there is no being external to its existence. It is the core, the kernel, and the all of Life, for not Matter but Thought is Being. Thought is the Divine link that unites us with the Eternal. Thought scintillates through the human mind, the Microcosm, and manifests its golden rays through the glories of the Divine mind, the Macrocosm.

The self-conscious human being is a mere reflection, a lesser Intelligence. The greater Intelligence of the Divine mind can only express itself fully when unresisted by the lesser Intelligence of the self-volitional Being. It does not dispute with the lesser, but withdraws itself; nor can we compel it to speak so long as we are not identical with it; for as long as man follows the lesser Intelligence, he is guided by a depraved Self-Will, and forces the Divine Principle from his thoughts.

We perceive as we write, and it will surely be observed by those who read, that we have here given the true account of the origin of Evil on earth, which, as we have said before, is separation from, and opposition to the Divine Will—and also the true definition of Hell, which is no locality, but a state opposed to that state known as Heaven, or the abode of goodness and peace. Hence the reason, and the beauty of the prayer, "Thy will be done on earth as it is in Heaven," which, when obtained through the growth and developement of the *Anima Divina*, or Divine Soul in us, will so effectually annihilate our own Self-Will, or *Anima Bruta*, as to transform the very earth on which we dwell into Heaven; or rather the *state* in which we are, into a heavenly state.

This *Anima Divina*, or innermost Being of our Being, which Modern Philosophy has agreed to call the "Unconscious," but which really is the Supremely Conscious Omniscient Being, *must be experienced to be known.* And yet this so-called "Unconscious" involitional part of our Being, the living, growing, multiplying, eternal, Divine Principle, is in itself, the Supreme Absolute Divine Omniscient Intelligence, and from it comes all knowledge. Whoever consciously attends to its Divine manifestation arrives at the cause of causes, the Soul World. The Soul, *in manifesto*, has alone performed the miracles historically recorded of the highest Adepts, or Heroes of Theosophy, and whoever will live as they lived, can become what they were, and can know what they knew.

How are we to attain to Soul-Knowledge?

By practice of that internal quiescence known to all true Theosophists, whereby the volitional passes into the involitional, and the dissevered and semi-antagonistic duality of our Being resolves itself into the primitive Monad of Divine existence, the Soul state.

Gotama Buddha did not speak vain words concerning the annihilation necessary for the possibility of the Nirvana, for it is literally by the dying of the Demon self, the *Anima Bruta*, that the God-self or *Anima Divina*, is re-born, and thus may Nirvana, "The Kingdom of Heaven," be attained even on earth.

The Occult practice of all true Theosophers is directed to attain a quiescence of Soul, intended to let the lower volition become entirely silent, and thus to allow the involitional, or human "Unconsciousness," which is the Divine Volition, and Consciousness, to express itself, and the Two, instead of being dissevered and antagonistic as they are in every unregenerate Being, become united, re-born, and harmonious. And as the human depraved Self-Will is the delusion and hindrance which prevents the Divine Absolute Will from expressing itself, the former, which is the Demon in man (because the opposer), must be totally annihilated.

Thus the human Being, when united with the latent Principle of Infinity, the Divine Soul, within his own Being, can become identical, and One with the Infinite, the Absolute, or GOD.

This is the rationale of the practice of Yoga, Tao, the Kabbala, &c. In brief the GREAT WORK is, to identify oneself with that innermost Self, that involitional part of our Being which is the Divine Living Soul, the Christ in us.

The more man has Self-Will, the less he has the Divine Will, and the less can he become united with the Divine Intelligence that permeates the Universe, and wherein man "*unconsciously*" lives, and moves, and has his Being, and the less can the Divine Illumination become manifested in him. *Man is decentralised from his Divine Centre of Absolute Reason, in the same ratio as he is concentred upon his human centre of depraved irrationality.*

One way leads to God, one way, and only one way; it is the path of earnest striving for truth and justice; it is the path of self-denial. As the Divine is in the human, so must the human be in the Divine—unselfed. As the Divine is in the human, so must the human be in the Divine—quiescent. As the Divine is in the human, so must the human be in the Divine—latent. As the human is in the Divine, so must the Divine be in the human—manifested. As the human *is*, so will the Divine be; as the Divine becomes, so is the human, for the Two are inseparable. When dissevered, they are united in two-fold misery; when truly united, and re-born, they are in the supreme happiness of Nirvana, which is the Kingdom of Heaven.

"For," as an old Theosopher has said, "so it is ordained between God and man from all eternitie, that man should be God, and God man, neither without the other: That is, as God Himself is, and will be the Paradise, Garden, Tabernacle, Mansion, House, Temple, and Jerusalem of Man: So also was man created for the same end, that he should be the Paradise, Garden, Tabernacle, Mansion, House, Temple, and Jerusalem of God; that by this mutual union and friendship of God with man, and of man with God, all the wisdome, power, vertue, and glory, eternally hidden in God, should be opened and multiplied. For God once made all things for man, but man for Himself."

CHAPTER II.

THE THEORY AND PRACTICE OF THEOSOPHY.

"THERE is a Science which is above all sciences; and is the unrecognised fountain of every science. There is an Art which is the source of all arts, yet cannot be taught, as it only teaches itself. There is a Philosophy that comprises the highest truths attainable by man. There is a Religion which has no belief, but an absolute knowledge, and is a direct communion between God and man. This Religion, Philosophy, Art or Science—call it what you will—is "Our Art," "The Kabbala," "The Occult," or "The Science of the Absolute,"—THEOSOPHY. The whole course of Theosophy is given by Anselm, of Canterbury, in the following few but pithy words: "We must believe to know, we must know to understand."

We can apply to Theosophy with equal truth the statement made by Eliphas Levi of Magic, that one cannot practise Theosophy who does not therein believe; and as it cannot be known without practice, an unbeliever is necessarily incapable of understanding Theosophy, no matter how much he may assail it with ignorant disputations.

However displeasing the statement may be to undisciplined minds, belief is an initiatory necessity for final salvation. We commence but do not end with belief. To inverse the given dictum: To understand, one must know; to know, one must have practised; and to practise, one must believe.

There are two methods of study: the theoretical and the practical. The course we would suggest is a combination of the theoretical-historical investigation, with practical and experimental efforts.

The theory of Theosophy can be gathered by an attentive perusal of the various Theosophic classics; the practice demands a life of uncompromising physical and spiritual purity, accompanied by continual aspirational psychic striving.

To give an approximately complete list of books to be studied that contain theosophical information would be very difficult, as we find that in most, and even in the best books on the subject, excepting a few chosen ones specially indicated in this volume, the information is scattered and is not given in the concise and practical way we would desire it to be.

For general and genuine information on the various systems of Theosophy we would however advise a perusal if not study of the following works:—

For Egyptian Theosophy: Hermes Trismegistus.[1] Also Jamblichos on "The Mysteries of the Egyptians."[2]

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[1] Hermes Trismegiste, traduit par Ménard. Paris, Didier, or an English translation.

[2] A new translation, by Professor Wilder, appears in the first volume of *The Platonist.*

Chinese Theosophy: The "Tao-te-king," by Lao-Tse; the "Nan-Hua," by Chuang-Tse, and the other classics of the Tao-Sse (*i.e.* the followers of Tao).[3]

Hindu Theosophy: The "Upanishads," the "Bhagavat-Gita," &c.[4] The "Vedantasara," the "Sankhyakarika," the "Sarva-Darsana-Samgraha," and Gough's "Philosophy of the Upanishads."[3]

Buddhist Theosophy: The "Lotus of the True Law," the "Dhammapadda" and "Sutta-Nipata," "Vinaya Texts," "Suttas."[4] Beal's "Catena of Buddhist Scriptures," "Udanavarga," &c.[3]

Magian Theosophy: "Zend Avesta," and "Pahlavi Texts."[4] The "Book of Arda Viraf," the "Desatir," &c.

Mohammedan Theosophy: The "Mesnevi."[3]

Hellenic Theosophy: "Plutarch's Morals: or, Theosophical Essays," translated by C. W. King.[5] Translations of Plato, Proclos, Plotinos, &c., by the late Thomas Taylor, also the Journal called *The Platonist,* which has among its objects the re-publication of the writings of Thomas Taylor.

Hebrew Theosophy: The "Old Testament" and "Apocrypha," "Philo Judæus."[5] "Etheridge's Introduction to Hebrew Literature," Ginsburg's treatise on "The Kabbala," Molitor's "Philosophie der Geschichte" (the third volume).

Christian Theosophy: The New Testament "Canon," and "Apocrypha." Also the works of Origen, Augustin, Dionysius, Hugo St. Victor, and Richard St. Victor, as well as those of the Christian Fathers, Saints, Mystics and Kabbalists, amounting to too many to enumerate.

Scientific Theosophy and Occult Philosophy may be studied in the works of the Gnostics, Alchemists, Rosicrucians, Mediæval Occultists, Illuminati, Magnetists, Spiritualists and Spiritists, and the modern Theosophists, which should be read with discrimination.

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[3] Published by Trübner.

[4] Sacred Books of the East. Published by The Clarendon Press.

[5] Published in Bohn's Series.

With the exception of the last three classes, namely the Hebrew, Christian, and the Scientific Theosophy, the books referred to are moderate in price, easily obtainable, and of comparatively facile comprehension for beginners. We have abstained mentioning more expensive and more abstruse works. As regards the other classes of Theosophy, they nearly all demand an acquaintance with ancient and modern languages: as for instance, a further study of Hebrew Theosophy would demand a knowledge of the Hebrew language, as also of the Soharitic idiom. Books of the Hebrew Kabbalists are neither so expensive nor difficult to obtain, but they are sealed to all, save to those who are Initiates and at the same time Hebrew scholars. The "Kabbala Denudata" and Pistor's "Scriptores Cabalistici" contain valuable texts in Latin.

Christian Theosophy must be separated from the ecclesiastic bias that disfigures an otherwise valuable system, wherefore we abstain from giving many names of writers, and would prefer the student to form his ideas by individual investigation.

As Scientific Theosophists, we consider all those who directed their efforts to individual Gnosis even in opposition to Dogma. Unlike the Christian Saints and Mystics who attempted to explain exoteric Christianity esoterically, and some Heretics who in outspoken terms differed with the teachings of the Church, the Alchemists, Rosicrucians and Occultists, and other mediæval spiritual pioneers, preferred to invent a

Hermetic Language which is incomprehensible to all except the favoured few who are in possession of the esoteric key to their symbolical jargon for the elucidation of the system of Theo-Philosophy which they designated "Our Art."

The works of the Alchemists, Rosicrucians, and Occultists, are generally not readily obtainable nor easily understood, while the phraseology of the Gnostics is so thoroughly Hermetic as to render their works useless for beginners. The *Pistis Sophia*, a work attributed to Valentinus the Gnostic, can only be appreciated by advanced Initiates. C. W. King's work on "The Gnostics" contains much valuable general information, but must be read with discrimination.

Alchemy, in so far as it is a spiritual science, forms but a branch of Theosophy, or it can rather be said to be but Theosophy under another name. The Adepts in Alchemy are at times discovered to be spiritual Adepts, although a material Alchemy or Occult Chemistry no doubt also existed.

An acquaintance with modern Philosophy will be found a useful preparatory study for a course of Theosophy. Many ideas now current in Philosophy are mere reflections from earlier Theosophists. Jacob Böhme may be considered as the precursor of German Philosophy. Giordan Bruno, and Spinoza, are found to be self-taught Initiates, and not Atheists. Descartes, Leibnitz, Malebranche, Berkeley, are teachers of a high order. The study of Kant cannot be too highly recommended. Fichte, Herbart, and Hegel may be left to specialists in metaphysics, but the works of Schelling, Lessing, Baader, and Lotze, will be found to be invaluable adjuncts to show the variety, yet unity, of mystic Philosophy. Among the Illuminati, Jane Leade, Pordage, Gichtel, Swedenborg, St. Martin, and Divonne, give most important information.

Mere reading will never make an Adept. The vital practice must not contradict the mental theory. It is only the striving aspirational Soul that can create a Divine World out of its own chaos. Books are only guides where they are not merely theoretically studied but practically followed. Those who, following the voice of the Soul, go to the source of all knowledge, will find a few of the many books sufficient to guide them to perfection.

The Beginning is in the now and ever unbeginning, and the End is, and ever shall be, in the unending. In the Beginning, that is, in the Divine Being, the Soul was a conscious part of God, but Self-Will, becoming manifest, the Divine Will became latent, and this was the Fall from the Divine to the Demonic, from the greater to the lesser, from the macrocosm to the microcosm, from love to fate. For the Beginning is an Eternal Present, and whoever arrives at the Divine Being, arrives at the Beginning and End of all things.

In this Beginning, or Divine State, man lived consciously in God, and the Supreme Consciousness, God, was known to and manifested in man.

Man was then an Absolute Being, having God-like power over the elements. He was not subject to time nor change, but existed even as God in Eternity, as an immutable Being; and this was, and shall be, the rightful and ultimate state of every living Soul.

By Self-Will, man fell from this Divine and Absolute state. He then became enslaved in evil desires and passions, and so much as man receded from the Divine Perfection, God, the Omnipresent, became more and more occult in him who had banished the Divine thought from his mind. God has not changed, but is ever immutable, and the Divine Light shineth now as ever; it is man only who has become so unconscious that he now knows not the Divine Consciousness, but names it "the Unconscious."

Time cannot measure things of Eternity. To fix a term when man's Soul first receded from the Divine Being, or when She shall return, is impossible.

Man is the only being in existence we know of having Free-Will. He is free to use or abuse his faculties, free to advance or recede, free to return or to stay away from his Eternal home.

The exercise of Man's Free-Will only leads him away from God. The Wise, knowing there is but one Good, and that is God, volitionally renounce this apparent Free-Will and attach themselves to the Divine Will, where they can alone experience their true and Eternal liberty.

The Laws of Nature are rigid, and unbending. Nature jests not, she obeys. Everything in nature obeys God except that extra-natural thing, the Free-

Will of man. This Free-Will God has given to man on probation, that is, to prove and prepare him for his career as a child of Eternity. If man had not this Free-Will, if the archangels (for they are but former human beings) had not the free power to become arch-demons, if the human being were in spirit to be surrounded by laws as rigid as those that rule his physical being, and he could therefore follow only one given direction at a given speed, he would be nought but an automaton or machine. Thus, evil is the necessity of Free-Will; and to know evil is necessary, in order that we may know how to avoid it. According to Eliphas Levi's interpretation of the Hebrew Kabbala, God rules by Power and Love—Gebura and Chessed. The laws of matter illustrate to us rigid laws of Power, the laws of spirit are expansive laws of Love.

The distinction of Power is for the dissevered. Divine Love is for those who are United to the Divine Being. It is an occult law, that man reflects God, and God reflects man.

One Principle pervades the Universe, and man beholds this Divine Being according to the grade of his development. In the highest state God is experienced as Absolute Love, in the lower, *i.e.*, in the intellectual and spiritual state, as Absolute Thought, but in the lowest, merely as Absolute Force.

Verily God's Love is ever active, while His Power has never yet been specially exerted, for against what should it be directed? As God containeth All, is All, and is in All, although the atoms may be unconscious of the whole, and the straying spirit has eclipsed the Divine memory of the Soul—the being that will but restore himself to the state of primitive purity, shall, in himself, behold the fountain and beginning of all existences, and will become aware that God rules alone by Absolute Love.

In that state, known as the Beginning, man lived an Absolute Life, which in Spirit was the Paradise, or Garden of the Soul, and on earth, the Golden Age. Man fell in Spirit from God to Demon, and had to re-ascend before he could again become a living Soul, and when ascended to be a God-like creature, he may again fall to a lower state. The laws of Spirit, though expansive, are tenacious; and while man has a Free-Will, his progress is incalculable by our finite conceptions. Well might Newton say "That the orbit of a comet can be computed, but not the course of human folly." Yet even this human folly has Divine Wisdom in it, and even the most bitter evil is intended to teach us the sweetest good in the end.

That there are such things as falls possible for the human being, much as it is to be deplored, is only natural to the Divine economy, and it is man's privilege to seek truth in error. For by folly we come to wisdom, from darkness we pass unto light, and by falling into evil we learn to value and adhere to good. Thus we acquire experience.

Existence may be compared to an infinite stream wherein all beings, or conscious monads are embodied as drops or particles. The current of the stream is the Divine Will, each monad having however a Self-Will can retard or hasten its individual progress, but those who identify themselves with the Divine Will pass most rapidly through the stream of existence and arrive at their ultimate end—the ocean of Absolute happiness. For there is but one Eternal Good, and that is God ; and all things external to that One are delusive, impermanent. Everything *is* only in as far as it is right, for only everything which *is*, is right; we must therefore search out and identify ourselves with that which really *is*, and not be psychologized by things having no real existence. Human distinctions are only real so far as they are true, and thus far are they also Divine ; for only that which is true, is Divine, and only what is Divine, is true.

Lost Atoms of Deity, erring monads of the Absolute, how long will you continue in the eccentricities of Self-Will; when will you discern the real from the unreal, the true from the false, the good from the evil? How weak are those who are strong in Self-Will, for there is only one Omnipotent Will possible, and all who are external to that Will are omni-impotent only; "Who is not for me is against me." O return all you that issued from God, return to the Kingdom of Heaven; the Soul latent within you awaits your return. The Kingdom of Heaven is at hand for those who are prepared to receive it—but seek not for it external to your own Divine Soul, for therein only is the Kingdom of Heaven.

The whole system of mathematics commences with a point; as with the unit commence centillions of numbers, and with a seedcorn endless multiplications of life, so with the Soul commence infinite manifestations and deflections of noumenal and phenomenal existence. The Soul is extra-and supernatural, and all creation is insufficient to illustrate her faculties and powers. Each thought may be capable of infinite combination, each work of interminable development, each being of endless progression, but the Soul attains her highest expresssion by becoming united with her Infinite Source, the source of Infinity.

The Soul in us is doubly encased, in Self-Will, and sensual mind. These form the *Anima Bruta* and shell. When by the destruction of the depravity of the senses and the perversity of the Will, this shell becomes dissolved, the *Anima Bruta* dies (*i.e.*, changes) while still incarnate. In the unregenerate state of life the *Anima Divina* is literally bound by the *Anima Bruta*, until released by the mystic death. Indeed, the physical death does not liberate the human Spirit so much as the mystic death of the perverse and depraved in us emancipates the Divine Spirit. To slay the *Anima Bruta* while yet in the physical body is then the work of the Adept. He dies while yet living and lives when supposed to be dying. There is a physical and a spiritual death, and the latter is as inevitable as the former.

The unenlightened die first physically through decay or violence, then pass through probationary Spirit-Spheres that surround the scenes of their former actions, and remain earthbound for ages. When at the end they have acquired the simple knowledge that they should have no Will but the Divine, passing through the death of Self-Will, the Spirit-death, they attain the Beginning; the Soul-World.

The Initiate dies first in Spirit and thereby attains to the Eternal Life of the Divine Soul. The shells of perverse Self-Will and depraved sensuality having been dissolved, the errors of irrationality being discarded, the Soul diffuses the vital force of immortality into the good which remains. The Spirit becomes absorbed with the Soul, the senses and intellect are consolidated into a whole, and the Supreme Thought is manifested.

The Rosicrucians taught, that by delivering the human Soul, and spirit, into the Divine Soul, it overleaps the intermediary states, or earth-bound spheres, and the spark becomes the Flame-Soul. Thus the invisible body dies and becomes spiritualised or rather Divinised. The spiritual death is the actual death of the depraved in us, and is as real as the physical death, but far more difficult to accomplish. The invisible body, the shell, must die before the Soul can live for ever.

Whether one subsequently continues in the physical body unto a patriarchal age, or prefers to shuffle off this mortal coil earlier, is of no importance; being at one with the Absolute, the Soul abides in her own

Eternal undying state, happen what may to the physical body.

The Soul-force is the supreme force in Nature. The cause of causes. The source of sources is the Soul-World. The Spirit-World is but a reflection, and the material-world but an effect. Spirit has only power over matter by virtue of the Soul that is latent in the Spirit. Soul cased in Self-Volition is already by a wall removed from the Absolute, encased in a sensual mind the Soul is still further removed from her primary archaic state. The manifest Soul alone stands in direct communion with the Cause of Causes.

This possibility of the One becoming the All, and the All becoming the One, is not pleasing to earth-bound spirits, who would assume themselves to be "our Guides" while they again have "Guides," and their Guides are guided by other Guides, and so on. Theosophy and Spiritualism therefore are not yet reconciled on this subject, for Theosophy acknowledges only one supreme Guide—the Divine-Soul.

Becoming one with his own Soul the true Theosophist acquires the Soul-Power of the Absolute without aid of any other Spirit but his own. To demand, or rely upon extraneous aid from the Spirit-World endangers the progress of the Soul.

Magic and mediumship in so far as these pertain to the *earth-bound spheres* of the Spirit-World are to be carefully avoided by all who aspire to a higher life, and who would not retard the growth of the Divine seed within them.

Mundane cares, perverse pleasures, and all irrational, unthinking evils, must be philosophically considered, wisely understood, and carefully eschewed.

Not the human, but the Divine Will is the Agent in Divine Magic. The human Volition can only be directed to suppress irrational wants, to will away the impure, vain, and evil thoughts that cling to us from former habits. Living upon pure food, in charity and humility, the senses soon become pliant and subjugated. No tortures of the Hatta Yogis, nor evocations of spirits are necessary, for these practices would only lead astray. The manifestations of Soul-Power alone can perform miracles of healing, &c., although aspirational spirits may voluntarily aid and assist.

Excessive ascetic practices, such as fasting, may give a temporary mystic experience, but the true practice is to refine the sensual, to become spiritual, and the spirit to become Divine by a life of abstinence from all impurities, be they physical, spiritual, or moral, as wrong food, wrong actions, or wrong thoughts. Everything must be rationally understood, and whatever is irrational will also be found to be wrong. When once we are but truly rational, we are at one with the Supreme Reason, the Supreme Good.

It may require years of physical and psychical purity before any mystic knowledge is received or experienced, but in the ordinary unregenerate course, ages pass by and the Soul becomes choked with iniquity.

"It comes best when of itself." Before striving to be filled one should be thoroughly void. The Divine knows best when we are ready to receive. Having within us a particle of the Omniscient, all we can do is to allow it to grow and not retard the growth. We must attain to a state of unison, to become aware of the Divine Harmony. Behold, Christ comes as a thief in the night, and "blessed are those that are born during sleep." In that night of sense that surrounds all humanity arises a midnight Sun, the Divine manifestation. Therefore it is said that Eve who represents the *Human* Soul was created during the sleep of Adam, and the Christ Child was born at night, when all the world slept, except the few faithful watchers.

Even as Adam mystically fell through Eve, or the *weakness* of his *human* Soul, so can he only be saved through Mary, or the *power* of the *Divine* Soul. It is the seed of the Woman, or Female Principle which bruises the serpent's head.

The Divine Soul is the Female Principle. Man's better half is Woman; this is not only a fact, as exoterically understood, but is also the great *esoteric* truth. The Mystic Woman within is Eve, the Organic Soul, the Mother of all living. Our Divine Nature, is Mary, the Divine Soul, that principle of life and growth wherein we live, and have our being, that enfolds and sustains us without living for itself; this great truth we must understand and learn to cultivate. The Woman "from above" must be manifested, and the masculine, *i.e.* the volitional, must be ruled by the involitional, which then becomes the Divine. It is "not my Will that is to be done but thine"; even as in the unregenerate state, nature, the Woman within us, lives not for herself, but for us only; and we have our life only by, and through her; so in striving for re-birth we must become a passive instrument, but only to the working of our own Soul, not to a strange spirit. No more living for himself, but only for the Soul, thus becoming the medium of his own Divine Spirit, ruling himself by himself, the two principles in man become united and re-born in the Divine. This is the mystic marriage of the King's Son.

There are several methods of spiritual exercise that predispose the Soul to re-birth. Most religious ceremonies were instituted by Initiates, and have an Occult or Theosophic reason. When the esoteric object is ignored, the exoteric observance is in itself without virtue. There is no salvation by proxy. The whole course of Divine initiation, or re-birth, must be individually undertaken, and passed through; and no spiritual intoxication, no biological fetish, no superstitious name or belief will save one who has not worked out his, or her own, salvation. For here we are in the domain of Absolute Reason and Omniscience, and no unreason or falsehood can hope to stand the ordeal that has to be passed through before the so much bandied, yet so little understood term—" Salvation " is attained.

Many Mystic terms are so much in current use and have become so thoroughly hackneyed, that some readers may rather prefer to seek for Spiritual Science among the unfamiliar Oriental systems, than look for the spiritual meaning of their own religion, that contains a sanctuary as esoteric as any which can possibly be found in the East.

Theosophic Practice was completely summarized in the words of that Divine Teacher, who said, "Be perfect, even as your Father who is in Heaven is perfect." The danger of individual aberration and misguidance differs for each individual character. It is useful to read the accounts given of the temptations of Saints. Jacob Böhme, in his *Treatise of the Four Complexions*, attempted to systematise the temptations to which Theosophists are subjected according to their predispositions.

The individual idiosyncracies, and acquired or educated perversities, are the chief cause of most of the temptations experienced by those who strive for the higher life.

The depravities with which the mind and Self-Willed spirit has tainted the Soul, or involitional part, has degraded the latter from a Divine to an animal, or even to the lower demonic state. The God within us having become a Demon, this demonic being is the primary cause of temptation. Long after we have thought ourselves freed from the depraved groove wherein the mind was used to run, outside spirits attached to this inclination will do their utmost to thwart our attempts at self-liberation, because with it they will be deprived of their participation of sensuous pleasures and associates. These are Bulwer's "dwellers on the threshold."

All human beings are, more or less, influenced by outside intelligences, be they embodied or disembodied.

Mediumship is far more common than is generally recognized, and it is the antithesis of Adeptship. To be open to all outside influences is the chief danger to be feared and avoided by those who attempt to be true Theosophists.

The same defect that causes mediumship, if carried to its full extent, will, in some cases, produce insanity. When we consider that all human beings are mediums to a certain extent, the number of absolutely sane people becomes very small indeed. Many may be sane in the outer-world sense, but to the Omniscient, or All-seeing eye of the Soul, most individuals must appear as if insane.

To be sane is to be perfectly balanced, physically and mentally, and to act only in accordance with the absolute dictates of Divine Reason. It is but those who have arrived at the other shore in this life, and whom the world often calls fools and visionaries, that are comparatively in a state of sanity, beholding the world as it is. And how are these, in turn, to impart their views? Some, like Democritos, have laughed at the world and denounced it mad; others, as Heraclitos, have wept, as Jesus, who wept over Jerusalem; while others, like Jesus and Gotama Buddha, strove, by precept and example, to instruct all in Spiritual Science; some again, like Pythagoras and the Hermetists, formed severe esoteric classes and schools; while such as Simon Ben Jochai, resolutely eschewed and hated worldly intercourse.

Like can only become united with its like, and if one would become united to the Absolute Reason, he or she must act in strict conformity with the laws of Reason, and not be impelled by irrationalities. Every act has a Divine and ultimate object and purpose, which we must recognize, and act in accordance with.

The Practice to be adhered to by one who aspires to be a Theosophist, is well set forth in the following extracts from two eminent text-books in different branches of respectively occult (or mesmeric) practice and theosophic Doctrine:

"The primary qualifications are, a great and good spirit, and great powers of mental concentration. A great and good spirit, of course, cannot be imparted. Its development means the development of the Holy seed within us, or, the outward expression of the Divine within. The greatest recognised example of such development in this and other Protestant and Catholic countries, has been in the miracles performed by Jesus Christ. An adept of this description is known to the true occultist, as the 'Red Magician.' To become a 'Red Magician' you must strictly follow Christ's laws, and imitate his life, both in the *letter* and in the *spirit,* till it is your very *nature* to be good, and there is absolutely *no evil in you.* Your Physical life must be entirely subservient to the spiritual. Your observations of externals must be simply to make a right use of them. Food and drink must be taken merely as necessary supports to the body. Fish, flesh, fowl, alcohol, drugs, tobacco, mineral substances, and every such perversion of the natural appetite must be religiously abstained from, and your tastes therefore re-directed into their proper channels. *Good* cannot be *good* if it be joined to one particle of evil. It is then only a mixture of good and evil. To become a 'Red Magician,' therefore, you must become all perfect, even as God within you is perfect. I do not say *all powerful.* You are always perfect, as long as you absolutely act up to the light within you, and ever pray, and strive for more light. This light will grow infinitely, this light is Deity, this light cannot die, because it is life, and there is no death in life. Decay of the body is destruction only of the machine, and not death to life. God, Life, Light, and Good, in this sense, are synonymous terms. Good is *immortal.* Evil is *mortal,* and there is no satisfaction in it. This light is fed only by constant prayer or desire for good. I am explaining *facts* to you, not mythical imaginings. If you wish to become a 'Red Magician,' mount the ladder, and you will find your Kingdom of Heaven which is 'within you,' and 'Our Father who is in Heaven,' and then you will be AT ONE WITH GOD."—*(Private Instructions in the Science and Art of Organic Magnetism by Mrs. Chandos Leigh Hunt Wallace.)*

The foregoing practically agrees with the cardinal doctrines of Theosophic Practice set forth in the *Perfect Way*, as the following shows:

"To attain to the perfection of the Christ—to polarise, that is, the Divine Spirit without measure, and to become a 'Man of Power' and a Medium for the Highest,—though open potentially to all,—is, actually and in the present, open, if to any, but to few. And these are, necessarily, they only who, having passed through many transmigrations and advanced far on their way towards maturity, have sedulously turned their lives to the best account by means of the steadfast development of all the higher faculties and qualities of man; and who, while not declining the experiences of the body, have made the spirit, and not the body, their object and aim. Aspiring to the redemption in himself of each plane of man's fourfold nature, the candidate for Christhood submits himself to discipline and training the most severe, at once physical, intellectual, moral, and spiritual, and rejects as valueless or pernicious whatever would fail to minister to his one end, deeming no task too onerous, no sacrifice too painful, so that he be spiritually advanced thereby. And how varied soever the means, there is one rule to which he remains constant throughout, the rule namely of love. The Christ he seeks is the pathway to God; and to fail, in the least degree in respect of love, would be to put himself back in his journey. The sacrifices, therefore, in the incense of which his soul ascends, are those of his own lower nature to his own higher, and of himself for others. And life itself, it seems to him, would be too dearly bought, if purchased at the expense of another, however little or mean—unless, indeed, of a kind irremediably noxious, whose extinction would benefit the world. For—be it remembered—though always Saviour, the Christ is sometimes also Purifier, as were all his types, the Heroes—or Men Regenerate—of classic story. Enacting, thus, when necessary the executioner's part, he slays for no self-gratification, but 'in the name of the Lord.'

"They who have trod this path of old have been many, and their deeds have formed the theme of mystical legends innumerable. Epitomising these, we find that the chief qualifications are as follows:—In order to attain to 'Power and the Resurrection,' a man must, first of all, be a *Hierarch*. This is to say, he must have attained the *magical* age of *thirty-three years*, having been, in the mystic sense of the terms, immaculately conceived, and born of a king's daughter; baptised with water and with fire; tempted in the wilderness, crucified and buried, having borne five wounds on the cross. He must, moreover, have answered the riddle of the Sphinx. To attain the requisite age, he must have accomplished the Twelve Labours symbolised in those of Heracles and in the signs of the Zodiac; passed within the Twelve Gates of the Holy City of his own regenerate nature; overcome the Five Senses; and obtained dominion over the Four Elements. Achieving all that is implied in these terms, 'his warfare is accomplished,' he is free of Matter, and will never again have a phenomenal body.

"He who shall attain to this perfection must be one who is without fear, and without desire, save towards God; who has courage to be absolutely poor, and absolutely chaste; to whom it is all one whether he have money or whether he have none, whether he have house and lands or whether he be homeless, whether he have worldly reputation or whether he be an outcast. Thus is he voluntarily poor, and of the spirit of those of whom it is said that they inherit the kingdom of heaven. It is not necessary that he have nothing; it is necessary only that he care for nothing. Against attacks and influences of whatever kind, and coming from whatever quarter without his own soul's kingdom, he must impregnably steel himself. If misfortune be his, he must make it his fortune; if poverty, he must make it his riches; if loss, his gain; if sickness, his health; if pain, his pleasure. Evil report must be to him good report; and he must be able to rejoice when all men speak ill of him. Even death itself he must account as life. Only when he has attained this equilibrium is he 'Free.' Meanwhile he makes Abstinence, Prayer, Meditation, Watchfulness, and Self-Restraint to be the decades of his Rosary. And knowing that nothing is gained without toil, or won without suffering, he acts ever on the principle that to labour is to pray, to ask is to receive, to knock is to have the door open, and so strives accordingly.

"To gain power over Death, there must be self-denial and governance. Such is the 'Excellent Way,' though it be the *Via Dolorosa.* He only can follow it who accounts the Resurrection worth the Passion, the Kingdom worth the Obedience, the Power worth the Suffering. And he, and he only, does not hesitate, whose time has come.

"The last of the 'Twelve Labours of Heracles' is the conquest of the three-headed dog, Cerberus. For by this is denoted the final victory over the body with its three (true) senses. When this is accomplished, the process of ordeal is no longer necessary. The Initiate is under a vow. The Hierarch is free. He has undergone all his ordeals, and has freed his will. For the object of the Trial and the Vow is Polarisation. When the Fixed is Volatilized, the Magian is Free. Before this, he is 'subject.'

"The man who seeks to be a Hierarch must not dwell in cities. He may begin his initiation in a city, but he cannot complete it there. For he must not breathe dead and burnt air—air, that is, the vitality of which is quenched. He must be a wanderer, a dweller in the plain and the garden and the mountains. He must commune with the starry heavens, and maintain direct contact with the great electric currents of living air and with the unpaved grass and earth of the planet, going barefoot and oft bathing his feet. It is in unfrequented places, in lands such as are mystically called the 'East,' where the abominations of 'Babylon' are unknown, and where the magnetic chain between earth and heaven is strong, that the man who seeks Power, and who would achieve the 'Great Work,' must accomplish his initiation."—*(The Perfect Way: or the Finding of Christ.* Lect. viii., part ii., pars. 18—23.)

Without Knowledge no Salvation, without Salvation no Knowledge. Theosophy has diversity yet unity, and not being based on belief but on individual Science, admits what all other systems fear—the right of private judgment. Thus, although we are not Yogins, we can sympathize with the aim of the true Yogi, observing at the same time that Yoga, although considered by Hindus as an indispensable Occult Practice, can only induce by Art in some, what becomes spontaneously manifested by Nature in others. When man attains to the apex of his Being, he sounds the Divine Octave, and another, the Divine Being, resounds in him. The Divine becomes spontaneously manifested when man is in unison with the Divine. Yoga may be considered as a laborious tuning to bring the human in accord with the Divine Harmony. Man to become a Medium for the Highest must be the Highest.

YOGA PRACTICE.

"A perusal of the Upashnakand of the Veda Bashya Bhumika, of Swami Dayanund Saraswati, and several treatises on Yoga philosophy taught me," says a student in Yoga-Vidya, "that there are eight parts of Yog, viz.:—Yama, Nyama, Asana, Prannayama, Pratyahara, Dharanna, Dhyana, and Samadhi."

The principles of Yama enjoin us:—

1. To observe perfect freedom from the desire of injuring others, and to realize, in practice, real love and heartfelt sympathy for all creatures.

2. To speak always the truth, making our words convey our exact meaning.

3. To be free from a desire to misappropriate others' property, however insignificant.

4. To practise self-denial, or in other words, never to allow gratification to carnal passions, even in thought.

5. To keep always and everywhere aloof from pride and vanity.

The principles of Nyama enjoin us—

1. To observe cleanliness of body, and purity of mind.

2. To be content and cheerful under all the vicissitudes of life.

3. To listen to, and practise, the doctrines calculated to exalt our mind, and refine our thoughts.

4. To read the sacred books, such as the Vedas, &c., and to have full faith in the existence of the Infinite Spirit, *Om*.

5. To bear always in mind that our actions and thoughts are watched and witnessed by the Omnipresent Spirit.

"Asana treats of the posture to be adopted at the time of performing Yoga. The posture assumed should be quite easy and in no way painful or inconvenient. For Oriental people, squatting is the one generally preferred.

"Pranayama relates to the suppression of the inspiration and expiration of breath.

1. When the breath is exhaled, the student should, before he takes it in again, allow as much time to pass as he conveniently, can.

2. And when it is inhaled, he should suffer the same amount of time to elapse before it is exhaled again.

3. He should then suspend breathing altogether, of course, for a few seconds at the beginning, and never so long as would cause him inconvenience, or prove dangerous to his health. In short, his practice must be regulated by his strength.

4. He should then inhale and exhale his breath slowly, and with less force than usual. I advise no person to practise this part of Yoga unless he has a Yogi at his side, inasmuch as it endangers health and life if unskilfully attempted, and in the absence of an instructor.

"Pratyahara requires to control our mind, so as to exercise full authority over one's feelings and emotions.

"Dharanna is to withhold the mind from all external objects and internal thoughts, and to concentrate it upon a certain part of the body, either the navel, heart, forehead, nose, or tongue; and then to meditate on *Om* and its attributes.

"Dhyana is to intensify that meditation, and to keep the mind void of any other thought, feeling, or emotion.

"Samadhi leads the Yogi to gain that perfection in the intensity of meditation which enables him to obtain absorption in the Infinite Spirit.

"In Dhyana, the Yogi is conscious of his own self, of his mind and of the Infinite Spirit; but in Samadhi he loses the consciousness of the first two, and the Infinite Spirit only remains before his mind's eye.

"Dharanna, Dhyana, and Samadhi, are together called Sannyama.

"No one should expect to enjoy the bliss of Sannyama, which is beyond all description, without first observing the principles of Yama and Niyama.

"God, the Primeval cause that pervades the universe, and is Master of all things, either animate or inanimate, is a Being invisible to the physical eyes, imperceptible to the bodily senses, and incomprehensible to our finite intellect. Who dares define such a Being, and in what language?

"No other language than that of the Deity Himself (if He can be said to have any specific language at all) can boast of representing Him as He is. And in Sannyama the devotee is brought face to face with this Being."—*The Arya*, Vol. I., p. 251.

Theology and Theosophy are, in a measure, based upon Anthropology. The deductions that Materialists would draw from this simple fact, however, are not admissible. Theology is not a branch of Anthropology, but with more truth can it be said, that as the human is but a part of the Divine, Anthropology is but a branch of Theosophy!

The very innateness and universality of a God-idea proves the reality and truth of that idea. Its modifications, according to the variety of human mentality, and national character, are subject to anthropological laws; but the Idea itself, and the Truth and Reality of a Divine Knowledge, are above the laws of Anthropology, as a light above our finite Reason.

The ethnic character and the national genius are no doubt reflected in the God of each people. The limitation of all nations to one particular ethnic God-idea is not desirable, nor is it aimed at in universal Theosophy. Our Temple is a Pantheon, admitting all Divine Ideas, and excluding only the Demonic; but before a God-Idea is admitted into our Pantheon it should be mathematically examined as to whether it is truly Divine.

CHAPTER III.

HERMETIC THEOSOPHY.

PART I.

THE SECRET OF MYTHOLOGY.

WHEN man first appeared upon this planet, whether as an animal, or "as a God," whether a pre-historic Golden Age was terminated by a cataclysm to destroy a race of highly developed but evil beings who abused the Divine Power entrusted to them, or whether man laboriously ascended to a consciousness of the Divine, through cycles of slow and steady progress, cannot be decided. Suffice it to say that there is as much evidence for an involution, as for an evolution; for the fallen angel, as for the ascended ape.

There may have been a physical evolution, and a spiritual involution, or a spiritual evolution, and a physical involution (matter degenerating as spirit left it), or a combined spiritual-physical evolution, or a combined spiritual-physical involution,—so-called facts could be adapted to any of these theories.

The existence of pre-historical Hermetic Myths affords us important evidence of a pre-historical system of

Theo-philosophy, which all subsequent systems have not been able to equal. That such could not have belonged to tribes of savages, but were the outcome of an advanced state of civilisation, is but a natural conclusion.

We may hazard the theory that the legendary Golden Age was a period when man lived in his rightful Divine State, gifted with Divine attributes. But by desecrating his Divine Nature, and abusing his powers (wherein may have been comprised a command over the worlds of matter and spirit), he may have become obnoxious to the Divine Beings of the other worlds, and caused a retrogression.

Nature's laws obey only those who are at One with the law giver. When the primitive people defiled their Divine Being, they lost their Divine Knowledge and Power, became subject to Laws of force, and were then unable to avert or foresee the catastrophe that probably destroyed the Continent they inhabited.

This cataclysm did not destroy all the Initiates, but a great fear seems to have seized upon those remaining, —a fear of communicating the former manifest Divine Knowledge; and instead of expressing their system of Theosophy in plain language, they preferred to invent Occult allegories, mystic myths, and an Hermetic language to which only the Hierophants retained the esoteric key; this however, in the course of transmission was totally lost.

The mythologic age was succeeded by the mythographic. As a spirit of allegorizing seems to have seized the Initiates of all nations at one time, it may well be considered to be the period following the Golden Age. Whatever then remained of Theosophy was veiled under Hermetic expressions, and by force of habit the Hermetic language and the language of allegory seemed to be considered essential for the transmission of Theosophic teachings; and, as the Soul in her supreme delicacy delights in veiling and concealing herself from prying curiosity, even Self-Initiated Occult Poets and Seers were involitionally drawn into an Occult mode of expression, and used Hermetic language by preference.

It is generally admitted that an esoteric doctrine existed in ancient times. This esoteric doctrine was Theosophy, the individual knowledge of God and of the Occult laws of Nature.

As an Hermetic language or Occult method of communication had to be used to conceal the Divine Science from the profane, we can only deduce what symbols could have served as analogies. Spiritual symbols could not stand for Spiritual knowledge, for these would have betrayed themselves; but material symbols afforded a ready analogy. Laws of matter are laws of Absolute Thought. They are the Potential mathematics of the Absolute. The Supreme Reason, and the principal of individual Reason are identical. Man is the Microcosm, God the Macrocosm. Therefore matter, which is one of the reflections of Deity, would serve as a true symbolical illustration of the mysteries of the Divine Spirit, the direct ray of the Eternal All-illuminating Sun of the Divine Being.

The ancient Theosophists, Philosophers, Prophets, Seers, Poets, and Initiates in general therefore availed themselves by preference of objects of the material and sensual world, as physical symbols for psychic secrets, and they may possibly have also used psychic illustrations for physical secrets of the Occult.

The entire esoteric system of Antiquity may thus be contained in the exoteric writings that have been transmitted to us, and he who shall apply the KEY of Theosophy to the portals of Paganism may yet enter the Pagan Temple and find the Great Arcanum—the ONE, enthroned in the Sanctuary in solemn splendour.

The great lost Secret that was reflected in the Ancient Mysteries, was the knowledge of God and His relation to Nature and Man; and the knowledge of Man and his relation to Nature and God. The ancient Hierophants had an Occult but Absolute Science, wherein Self-knowledge, God-knowledge, and Nature-knowledge, were combined in an exact and mathematical system, and of which the Hermetic and profane sciences that have survived were merely fragments, and these were in turn used as a vocabulary, more as a means to conceal than reveal. For whether the terms of Astrology, Alchemy, Magic, Mythology, Natural Science, Philosophy, Ethics, or Metaphysics, were used, they were only employed esoterically to transmit the one great Secret, which was, and is, the Great Arcanum of all ages—the Manifestation of the Occult, and the realisation of the Absolute.

Nearly all Philosophers, Poets, and persons of culture among the people of antiquity were initiated in lesser mysteries, corresponding to our Spiritualism; while the more advanced were acquainted with the greater and higher mysteries of the Eternal Soul Truths of Theosophy.

The writings of ancient Initiates can only be understood by Initiates, and we find that many ancient, now accepted as classic writers, hint at the Great Arcanum in obscure and mysterious language.

The works of the Mythographers and inspired poets are permeated with the Hermetic language of Ancient Mystic Theosophy.

Homer, Hesiod, Orpheus, Virgil, Ovid, teach us mystic myths. Empedocles, Pythagoras, Democritos, Heraclitos, Plato, Xenophon, Aristotle, Proclos, Plotinos, and many more, teach a veiled Theosophy. But all use a special Occult mode of expression, and both Poets and Philosophers seem to have an agreed method of mystic and allegorical Hermeticism for those higher truths, which were ever beyond the grasp of the unphilosophic and untrained minds of the multitude.

To give merely an outline of the principal terms used as Hermetic symbols by some philosophical Poets, and poetical Philosophers, would demand a volume, and, in any case, more space than the limits of this work permit, and probably would require more attention than the reader would care to devote to their study.

We must, therefore, content ourselves with stating that the Theosophist beholds an inner meaning in Epics, Myths, and Systems of Thought, and those vast mental monuments of antiquity are Occult works which he reads in a spirit totally different to the exoteric letter.

To the Theosophist the Occult Truth doffs her veil, and he beholds her Holy beauty in that intensity of chasteness that guides his Spirit to her Divine Manifestation, wherein he must abide.

To interpret Occult Soul-Allegories one must strive for the regenerate Soul-Spirit, which is the Divine Spirit. When in that Spirit these Epics are not tales of the hoary past, nor are the Apocalypses visions of a remote future. They ever treat of the eternal NOW, the ever-abiding and everlasting Presence, that has been called by a multitude of names, and yet Itself remains unnamed and Ineffable.

The vast stores of mystic Allegories of the Mythologists are creations and relations of the Soul. The Soul creates, the Soul relates, the Soul mirrors herself to herself.

Saint Paul tells us in plain words that the history of Abraham, Sarah, and Hagar, is an Allegory; in like manner is the Ramayana a poem of Occult philosophy, and every Adept is the "great hero" of the Mahabarat. The "Iliad" and "Odyssey," as well as the Bible, mystically illustrate occurrences that every human Soul at one time passes through. Sacred History is merely a veil for Allegory, and Allegory another veil for true Theosophy—the Occult Knowledge of God. Whenever Allegory historizes, or history allegorizes, it is but to conceal the Great Arcanum of the Occult from the gaze of the profane, vulgar, vicious, and depraved. But when a man begins to think, he ceases to be profane, when he begins earnestly to study, he ceases to be vulgar, when he begins to discipline his mind, he ceases from being vicious, and when he begins to act rightfully, he ceases to be depraved.

Thus these Divine Allegories had the fourfold intention of refining the four Kabbalistic Elements of Man's Mind—the Senses, the Reason, the Imagination, and the Understanding; and to aid him by a concentration of thought to re-create, and re-generate his Spiritual Being.

The Soul is at once the subject, actor, plot, aim, and object in these allegories, and to understand these Occult Teachers, the disciple should be on the same spiritual plane, and thus he will understand the hints, and seeing the meaning, will smile, and feel the friendly grasp of the Brother-Initiate who wrote for his guidance.

For the Kabbalists and Hermetists have a most peculiar humour, which no one who is not in the same way of thinking can appreciate. They have solemn jokes, serious puns, cool contradictions, and grave misstatements, which when strictly considered are no misstatements, but only misapprehensions for those who are on the lower plane. Deliberate mystifications stand at times side by side with the most outspoken, honest, and Absolute Truths. It is, therefore, only natural that the superficially learned have given up all attempts to interpret Hermetic writings, all of which demand, if they are to be rightly understood, more or less of the spirit of illumination.

However indispensable in the past, when it was necessary to reserve sacred knowledge for the initiated, Allegory is a mode of teaching quite unsuitable to the present unspiritual age, and must be supplanted by an exact and plainly worded science. The Spiritual Science of the future will be no more "Occult," but manifest, the time having come for making known the unknown.

Should it be objected that fables and myths are mere inventions of the imagination, we would point out that, even if we grant this, they do not therefore cease to be Divine. The imagination is the highest gift of God. It is the link connecting the human Soul with the Divine Being; and with beings as perfect and pure as the ancient Illuminati, therefore the imagination would communicate a pure stream of Divine truth, inculcating eternal, psychic facts, demanding only to be rightly understood in order to be prized and valued.

To conceal the Great Arcanum from the profane, the ancient Theosophists invented systems of Hermetic language which, indeed, proved effectual. This Kabbalistic vocabulary passed out of the Sanctuary, among those who knew nothing of the Occult meaning; hence Principles and Ideas were ignored, and only names and dead things considered. It is thus that the Hermetic language has led the whole world astray.

Mankind of the present age being endowed with the same faculties that the races of the mythologic age were gifted with, the illustrations from Myths and Allegories will be found as applicable to the psychic state of the present generations, as to those of the past.

Myths were, by the Hierophants of Hermetic Theosophy, intended to describe, under the guise of various Allegories and symbols, the faculties and powers of the Soul, her history, and course of Re-birth into the Divine State.

The Secret of Mythology is not astronomical or astrological, but psychic and Theosophic. Myths may borrow physical symbols as illustrations for psychic Arcana, but they do not ultimately refer merely to the course of planets and stars, to tell us that it is cold in winter and warm in summer; for why should the ancient Hierarchs have taken such a roundabout way to tell us simple facts, the knowledge of which would neither endanger them nor others?

But there is a Knowledge which is Power—this is Soul-Knowledge, Divine Knowledge, Theosophy—our Divine Magia. Possessed of the secrets of that Divine Spiritual Science and becoming even as God, acts of Power can be performed; and were that knowledge to become common, incalculable evil might result, as witness the knowledge of Dynamite on the material plane. The knowledge must, therefore, be only imparted to those who are worthy. The sword of Power should not be given to him who would use it as an assassin's dagger.

The following is not a bad definition of what our Science can do when manifested in one who has passed through all the grades of initiation and who has become what is commonly called an Adept.

> "True Science, according to Buddha as well as the best of Hindu sages, exercises dominion over the forces of nature and all created beings; it is endowed with the powers of miracle and enchantment; for it enables its possessor to assume any form, to

see and hear at any distance, to fix the length of his life and to know the thoughts of others, to make himself visible and invisible at will, to fly through the air, to walk on water as others walk on dry land, to tell how many drops and how many living creatures there are in the ocean, to dry up the sea, to grasp the sun and moon, to hide the earth with the tip of his finger, and to shake to their foundations earth and heaven; nay more, it is Science alone which leads to true and imperishable happiness, since it is the last stage before the soul enters into the bliss and salvation of the Nirvana." —*Kalisch, "Path and Goal."*

The following is another definition of the capacities of a Spiritual Adept:—

"The Yogi may not see or hear what passes around,—he may be insensible to external impressions, but he has intuition of things which his neighbours cannot see or hear. He becomes so buoyant, or rather so sublimated by his Yoga, that gravitation, or as Bhaskaracarya calls it, the attractive power of the earth, has no influence on him. He can walk and ascend in the sky, as if he were suspended under a balloon. He can by his intuitive process inform himself of the mysteries of astronomy and anatomy, of all things in fact that may be found in any of the different worlds. He may call to recollection the events of a previous life. He may understand the language of the brute creation. He may obtain an insight into the past and future. He may discern the thoughts of others. He may himself vanish at pleasure, and, if he choose to do so, enter into his neighbour's body and take possession of his living skin."—*Banerjea, " Dialogues."*

If the reader will attempt to imagine what the disastrous consequences would be should a vicious being become possessed of this power, he may well comprehend with what anxious care the ancient Hierarchs kept this knowledge,—which, to some favoured individuals, is synonymous with Spiritual Power—the Great Arcanum of their Hermetic Theosophy. There was ample reason for concealment where there *was* something to conceal;

but it would have been absurd to invent elaborate systems merely for astronomical observations, the knowledge of which could, even in the most mischievous hands, injure no one. If there was, moreover, a tradition of the destruction of former highly developed races, brought about principally by their abuses of magic power, it would all the more serve to foster the spirit of mystery which, under such circumstances, may have had a *raison d'être.*

We affirm, therefore, that the Secret of Mythology is to be found in Theosophy only, and that physical, astronomical symbols, were invented but to foreshadow and conceal psychic and magical mysteries.

The Mythos does not refer merely to the course of the sun through the signs of the Zodiac; for these material objects, however vast, are objects of time, not of eternity. The only Eternal thing is the Soul. Why should the ancients limit their thoughts to matter and its phenomena, when at Death the whole material universe disappears and becomes as invisible as the spirit-world appears to be to the incarnate? The only thing visible to the spirit is spirit; and matter would be all but invisible but for the spirit embodied in it.

Those things which are most material to our physical senses are least material to those in spirit-existence who have freed themselves from the trammels of sense. What is matter to us is nothing to them; while spirit, which is their matter, is as nothing to us; and thus it is that we penetrate their spirit substances without being conscious of it, while they pass through our matter as unconscious of and unaffected by it as if it were non-existent.

Man in his perfect, that is, in his Eternal state, being One with the Absolute, is a Being of Power. This Power is only in the Soul. The Soul-Power is the supreme Power in Nature. It extends over the worlds of Soul, Spirit, and Matter. These are the Three Realms of Science of one who aspires to be a Trismegistus or Divine Adept, and to the embodied this Supreme Glory is attainable by a Knowledge of their own Soul, for *that* is the Knowledge which is Power.

The Soul-World radiates and illuminates its Power through all things and beings. Things are only what the Soul makes of them; and beings are what they have made of themselves, by virtue of that very Soul that is within them, which they can exalt to re-ascend to its Divine source, or degrade to demonic depravity.

Mythology, esoterically interpreted, intends to characterize the almost infinite variety of the manifestations of Soul. Taking Hellenic Myths as an example, we find the most ancient God is Eros—Love. This Love is typified by a child, and Plato says, "A better guide than love cannot be found." Volumes could be written on the Spiritual mysteries embodied in this Mythos of Eros—the re-born Soul—the subject can never be exhausted, for it is Eternal and Infinite.

Phœbus-Apollo, the Soul resplendent as understanding and science; Minerva, the Soul in its unerring wisdom; Diana, the Soul as intuition and chaste imagination; Mars, the Soul as the striving principle;

Mercury, or Hermes, the Soul as mind, intellect, thought; Jove and Juno, Spirit and Soul, united in their sovereign unity; Venus, the Soul as Love and Beauty; and Saturn, that slow, lame, heavy judgment, the faculty acquired by many gradual steps of experience.

This is not intended to be a guide through the Pagan Pantheon, but merely an attempt to unlock the doors of the Sanctuary, that very Sanctuary of which we feel assured that THEOSOPHIA, the Divine Science, was there enshrined, as a perusal of "Proclos's Theology of Plato" will convince.

The course of the sun through the signs of the Zodiac only serves as a symbol to the Hermetic Theosophists, to illustrate the course of the Soul to Divine Re-birth. The manifestation of the Divine Spirit, opposed by the Demon, or Self-Willed depravity of individuated beings, causes the spiritual whirlpools or vortices we call passions. The unregenerate mind of man seems to be entirely ruled by a certain number of passions. Whether these are determined by his descent into this particular system of the universe, and correspond to the number of planets, we will not attempt to say.

Astrological configurations of the natal hour hold apparently omnipotent sway over those who are enslaved in the merely sensual life. Up to spiritual Re-birth man is ruled by Fate, but thereafter by Grace alone.

The vortices wherein the *human* mind manifests itself were fitly symbolised by the planets of the solar system.

The orbs of Heaven and the mind of man are by more than one law united, and can become fit illustrative symbols for each other. Astrology and Psychology, like time and eternity, are connected in us.

The many names invented to express the manifestations of Soul-Power show the superiority of the Hermetists over other Theosophists in that respect. While the Hermetic system was a science of the Absolute, the systems of Theology officially promulgated were dogmatic assertions based on ignorance.

The Rule of the Gods or Divine Adepts, the Golden or Edenic age has left traces of reality sufficiently substantial to remove it from the range of fable to the record of history.

The so-called Cyclopean remains were no more constructed by uncultivated races than they were erected by the Djinns of Arabian fable.

Mythological personages, having historical prototypes that were adorned for the purpose of serving as illustrations to Occult Allegories, may have borne totally different individual characters from the various allegorical attributes and national idiosyncrasies, whereby hierarchic Hermeticism concealed more than revealed the Occult ideal by an exoteric idol.

Hercules may have been a mild, inoffensive individual, and his Twelve Labours may be interpreted as accomplished in the course of Re-birth. His name, Hera-cleos, means Earth-cultivator, and his labours indicate that this cultivation was of a Mystic and invisible earth, the sensual world within, not without.

We know so little even of historical characters that it is not surprising if individuals who were systematically veiled in Mystic clouds should gradually be lost to sight and only distorted forms appear in their places.

In many instances Mystic Allegories are strongly marked by the locality where they were invented, showing how the inventors borrowed illustrative and familiar symbols. Many of these friendly hints and glances are lost to us, and although the style often serves to indicate the source of particular myths, it at times renders the myths themselves partly incomprehensible and causes them to lose their greatest beauty to those who are not intimate with the objects that were most familiar to the Mythologist of the past.

The difference between a Myth and an Allegory is this:—The Mythologist allegorizes and gives certain names to his characters, the Allegorist mythologizes upon characters to whom he applies no special name. Jesus gave no names to the Characters of his symbolical Allegories, which being devoid of the obstrusive personality of enacting characters, were never considered as anything else than anecdotic inventions, such Meshallim as are customary among the Jews. Different was it with the Myths invented by the more Ancient Hierophants, the Hermesians, Magi, Brahmins, Druids, or by originators of ancient religious systems, as Moses, Manu, Zarathustra.

Thus Moses and his followers, going upon the principles of the Hermetic system of Egypt, until the Prophets became acquainted with the teaching of the

Magi, invented a Mythos, that has been preserved in our Bible, which is a Mystic Drama representing the career of the Spirit and the development of the Soul through the different male characters successively presented, the females representing the Soul, or that particular affection or Will to which these are successively united. Each of the characters figures one stage or form of the inward life, for Soul and Spirit though ever the same, take fresh form at different stages, as the self-same individual is different in outward appearance at different stages of his growth. The purport of this Mystic Drama is to show what Adam is, and what can spring out of him of good, bad, and desperately wicked, through Eve or the human earthly Soul; or in other words, Adam and his seed, the fruit of animal and human nature, until finally perfected in the Mystery of the Holy Incarnation through the Seed of the WOMAN (Mary, or the Divinely conceptive Soul), all which will be found most elaborately set forth by Mr. Andrew Jukes in his remarkable work, "TYPES OF GENESIS," which he has founded on the writings of the early Christian Fathers of the Church, who most unequivocally declare in their works that this is the true meaning of the sacred story, or history, but it is the history of the Spiritual progress of man as an individual, and not the material history of the race.

The difference between Myths and Allegories consists thus only in the methods of their invention. Both are one in purport, and were invented to teach Mystic Truths illustrating and inculcating the process through which the Soul has to pass anterior to her Divine Regeneration or Re-birth. These truths could not be commonly and indiscriminately imparted, as pearls should not be thrown before swine, or that which is Holy given unto dogs. In the course of time the mythic names themselves became barriers in the way to the Mystic Truths they were intended to point out, and where a Hierophant gave no names in his Allegories, his own name and character became the object of erroneous adoration, in preference to God, as is notably illustrated by those Divine teachers Gotama Buddha, and Jesus Christ. Mankind is too little minded for the great simplicity of the Divine-human and human-Divine Theosophy. The grandeur of the I—Nought, I—All, I—God, can only be apprehended by one who can be Nought, All, and God.

CHAPTER IV.

HERMETIC THEOSOPHY.

PART II.

EGYPTIAN AND CHRISTIAN GNOSTICISM.

THEOSOPHY in Antiquity was, as it is now among the Brahmins, considered the exclusive privilege of the Hierarchy, so that others who wished to attain to a knowledge of the Occult, had to go for initiation either to the priests, or to initiate themselves by a life of isolation and earnest spiritual striving.

Meanwhile the masses of mankind gradually fell lower and lower. While the Soul was continually striving and urging them on in search of Her lost happiness, they consequently perpetrated the greatest evils. Evil being only ignorantly misdirected striving, and separation from the Good; when man has not God in his Soul, he developes, or rather becomes, a demon.

As man is in the body, so he remains in the Spirit. When the fallen ones die in their irrational and insane condition, they find themselves bound to their depravities.

These spirits are thus earth-bound, and instead of seeking to ascend, combine together and influence sensitives, to proclaim them as Gods, and to offer to them a culte of depravity as conditions of manifestation.

Thus God and the gods became as opposites in ancient Theology.

Man, having once given credence to the false, became still more deluded; and Demon-Worship was at one time a religious culte among nearly every nation on earth, either as Polytheism or Idolatry.

Some writers, on what is called the Science of Religions, whose views it is not our intention to controvert, have invented an hypothesis, intending to prove that Animism gradually developed into Spiritualism and Monotheism. This we cannot fully endorse.

It is not always the lower that has developed the higher, but the higher that, in some instances, has become lowered. There is no proof that the entire human race was at one time in a state of savagery, while on the other hand there are many reasons to believe that savage races, as races, are but remnants of a degenerated and lost civilisation.

With Idolatry ranks worship of spirits, correctly speaking Demonism, be it expressed in the cultus of Fetichism, Polytheism, Physiolatry, and the magical phenomena that from such cultus sometimes results. All these are degenerated Spiritualism.

Soul-Worship, Monotheism, the Pantheism of the Initiates, Theosophy, and true Mysticism, we would class with the Psychic, Esoteric, and Occult. False Mysticism is generally a degraded kind of Spiritualism. As the Divine decreases, the Demonic increases.

Idolatry is a luxuriance of Theism, an irrational perversion of the religious feeling. In Hinduism for instance, where the religious feeling of the lower castes is left to itself by hierarchic contempt, and allowed to be freely misguided by earth-bound spirits, a Polytheistic

Spiritualism, as elaborate as degenerate, is the result. Physiolatry never existed among Initiates, with whom Material Symbols ever stood for Spiritual Truths.

Fetichism we might class as Spiritualism, for the very reason that as some *Savants* of the future, who ignore the spiritual part of religions, as do modern *Savants* when attempting to interpret the religion of savages, may, for instance, learnedly relate how the sect of Modern Spiritualists were Table-Worshippers, Fetichists, whose Fetich was a table, around which they collected, regarding it as their God. Trees, rocks, and consecrated spots may be to savages what tables are to Spiritualists—mere means of spirit-intercourse. Those who assume to interpret the religions of the past, should be aware that man is ever the same, and the identical feelings and ideas of the past exist among us in the present, however disguised they may be under new names.

An evolution, or gradual perfecting of religious ideas can no doubt be traced, but the theory of Evolution cannot well apply to Free-Willed Beings. Whether the lower ever developes into the higher we will not stay to question; a Free-Willed Being can progress or retrogress, evolute or involute, as he Wills, but the Laws of Nature ever go in one direction.

All Creation obeys these Laws of Nature; man only as a Free-Willed Being has the too-often abused privilege of disobedience. Though every trangression, be it physical, spiritual, or moral, must inevitably meet its chastisement, man only too often, either knowingly or unknowingly, avails himself of his prerogative, and wars against Nature and God to his own retrogression.

Had the path of evolution that naturalists claim to have traced in the organic world, been apparent in the moral world, man would now be a God-like Being, having, by his Divine Union, an Absolute knowlege of Nature; whereas, when we attempt to trace the wisdom of the Ancients, we find that they were psychically more advanced, and developed, and nearer to the spiritual and Divine world than man is of the present day. We are therefore led to believe that as the human being is perfected, in so far as he reaches this higher state of development, he passes on to higher states, thus making way for succeeding generations who by comparison appear to be both mentally and morally degenerate.

We cannot decide whether the ancient Hierarchs at first merely humoured the popular demand for gods that could be bribed through the intermediary of the priests, or whether the priests themselves created such demand, and compromised with the earth-bound spirits for their services. The more scrupulous among the priests may have stifled their conscience with the idea that as a Divine Principle underlies all natural phenomena, Polytheism and Idolatry could be no great evil, nor so very irrational as we now know it to be.

"If the Vedic Polytheism represents God *in* Nature, worshipping the manifestation," says: *J. F. Clarke in "A Comparison of All Religions,"* "the Egyptian Polytheism represents God *behind* Nature, and the Greek Polytheism gives us God wholly detached from Nature, and developed into human beings, with human passions, experiences, and enjoyments. The Greek gods are men, full of human life; the Vedic gods are powers of nature; the gods of Egypt are abstract symbols."*

"But through all the Polytheisms of the earth there runs this one conviction, that the whole is filled with spiritual powers. Behind all matter is spirit; above all that we see is the unseen; the phenomena which pass before our eyes in Nature do not come from any iron fate or any blind chance, but from intelligence, purpose, a Will that chooses, a heart that desires, a mind that creates. In all Polytheisms there is unity and variety; in some of them the unity is more pronounced, in some the variety."

"Idolatry," continues the same writer, "is Polytheism pushed to its extreme limits. In this degenerate system, which has so widely prevailed, the unity in Nature-worship has been wholly overcome by the variety. The Divine powers have become detached from the All of Things, and become independent local deities, each worshipped in his own house, and at his own altar. Such were Baal, and Ashtaroth in Syria, Juggernauth and Rudra in India, Osiris and Typhon in Egypt, Artemis at Ephesus, Aphrodite at Cyprus and Corinth. In this form of worship, passions, instead of being restrained are deified. Each man worships the God after his own heart, and so justifies his own limitations. He makes his gods not merely like himself, but like his lower self, his one-sided self."

Idolatry had a spiritual part, and wherever there was a place for Idolatry, that place became a haunt for demons, who at times would manifest themselves and assume a specious appearance, and when they found believers their pretensions increased until they were considered as the sole Gods. Thus it will be perceived that even religious feelings, when not rightly directed, may lead to Hell instead of to Heaven.

It is not quite known how far we are ruled by friendly or unfriendly demons, but their power over us can be no greater and no more lawful than the power assumed by man over man. A compromise to pacify unjust beings who domineer without reason or authority, however beneficial it may have appeared at the time to all except the Eternal Being, would, in the end, only show itself to be an evil measure, equally destructive to all connected with it.

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* May not all Gods invented by the ancient Hierarchs have been symbols?

We have thus far undertaken an excursus into the lower regions of the Spirit-World, as the so-called "Gods" occupy such a formidable ground in Ancient Theosophy, we think it necessary to give some definition of the popular worship. The people did not invent the Gods, or we should have systems of planless absurdity, but the Priests, in compliance with popular clamour, interwove among the mass of fables, here and there, some Occult truths. It is possible that all these "Gods" were merely symbols of Divine or Demonic Passions.

The Divine Light was not in all equally darkened. Even in the most depraved generations there still remained, or became spontaneously developed, Initiates and Adepts, who desired to impart to those who were worthy, that only Truth attainable by man; and, in order to prevent the total loss of the Divine Mysteries, they perpetuated their system by tradition, and continued the invention of those Occult fables and myths wherein they implanted the Secret of Theosophy.

In those early ages this may have been a necessary precaution. The profane were unworthy because incapable of receiving Divine Truth, which can only be communicated to those who, by a pure life, have become Divinised or Re-born; and the Logos, the Great Arcanum, communicates itself, and cannot be communicated volitionally. There is no forcing the Great Secret.

All Theosophists have intuitionally the same Mystic Philosophy, which, when their various systems are compared, gives the most conclusive evidence of the truth of Theosophy, and of the reality of the Great Arcanum; as so many exalted individuals arriving independently at the same view must prove to all rational minds that the things related, namely, Theosophy, and the Great Arcanum thereof, cannot be otherwise but real and absolute facts.

In the course of time, as Hierarchies were overthrown, Schools and Academies were dispersed, religious systems were abolished, the Key to the Hermetic terms and Mystic symbols of that venerable science became lost, and the Hermetic wording is now to the uninitiated but a source of hopeless confusion.

As the Heathen Hierarchies had Theosophists among the priests, we encounter the strange paradox of Absolute Truths and untruths being blended together, Soul-worship in the Sanctuary for the Initiated, with Demon-worship in the outer courts for the uninitiated. But when even the Soul-worship degenerated, and the Hermetic system was found to be insufficient to manifest the Eternal Soul-Truths, then God the Soul gave a fresh impulse to the spiritual life of mankind, by becoming manifested to individual ascetics and self-taught Initiates. Revelations are only Revelations to those for whom they were revealed; but these spontaneous manifestations, emanating through solitary individuals, and coming with new life and great power, were generally liberal, and attempted to be universal. The fossilized ethnic systems that veiled themselves under Hermetic symbols were, however, Theosophic as well, but more inclined to be national, tribal, and conservative to the last degree. Thus the Church of Egypt was full a thousand years decaying. The Church of India resisted even a Buddha, and the Jewish Church remained nearly untouched by the efforts of Jesus.

In the spiritual economy of the world, the national and the individual thus equiponderate; and while the spiritual democrats made the esoteric exoteric, the spiritual aristocrats made even the exoteric esoteric.

These two inclinations are endemic to humanity; and while some would draw all up into Heaven, others would exclude all but the select few who guess their riddles, and to them only would they measure out air, and light, letting none have a fraction more than they believe he merits. It is equally as great an error to initiate the unprepared, as to leave the people totally without a guide. It is almost better to throw open the doors of The Temple to all, than to close them to all in such a manner that none can have access to the Sanctuary. The more the Soul is tyranically forced down, the more She will rebel, and the more a people are degraded, the more the degradation will rebound on the degraders.

In religion there is apparently a struggle between the esoteric knowledge of the few, and the exoteric ignorance of the many. As ignorance is ever the enemy of science, the teachers who know are often persecuted by those who pretend to know. The true Church had at times to remain Occult, while an official church was dominant, and illumination was eclipsed by dogma. The exoterists were not always at the same time the esoterists, although this was the case in some Hierarchies.

The war between the Occult and the official Church became at times in the West bitter and uncompromising, and neither would grant the other a right to exist. But while the exoterists, when in power, had their opponents destroyed, the esoterists have shown themselves more merciful, as they have desired but the enlightenment of their enemies.

It will be seen that supposed dead and long-forgotten tendencies and ideals in the human mind, continue to exist, and are, although unrecognised, still among us. The spirit of Hierarchic Obscurantism, far from being annihilated by the Christ, availed itself of that symbol and acquired a new career of life and power. Hermeticism, which many may have supposed to have died and perished in Egypt, continues in Christian Exoterism.

If we are not told to believe the fable of Osiris, we are commanded to revere equally fabulous Biblical narratives as historical and incontrovertible facts, which we have just seen are historical only as regards the inner and spiritual life of man. The science of

Biblical exegesis not only denies the truth of the Bible as History, but prepares the way for the reformation of the Hierarchy, who by a combination and renewal of the heterogenous religious elements of India, Persia, Judea, Hellas, Rome, and Egypt, produced what has for nearly twenty centuries been known as the Christian Religion.

The most ancient book of Theosophic teachings, "The Book of the Dead," which, even by its title, is indicative of its Mystic contents, forms a complete course of initiation for Spiritual Adeptship.

"The Book of the Dead" is not of those who died physically, but who have passed through the mystery of the Spiritual Death, the crossing of the Mystic River, without which there is no arrival at the other shore. This miraculously preserved Mystic volume was consigned as a last gift by the ancient Hermetic Hierarchy to every initiated Egyptian, to guide him, after the death by decay, through the realms of spirit-darkness, wherein the uninitiated are lost. It was given with the loving intention that if the physically deceased had not completed his initiation in this world, he might, by aid of that book, which was for many ages considered as the *ne plus ultra* of Spiritual Science, complete his initiation and arrive at Perfection, the Supreme Good, by the Path of the Just.

The to us unfamiliar Egyptian symbolism of those pre-historic Gnostics—or men who knew the Absolute—may be difficult to interpret at present after that Hermetic system has been dead for nigh two millenniums, and has been re-discovered in its stupendous ruins only by a series of providential miracles. The phraseology may be as incomprehensible to us as that of the Christian Theosophists may appear strange to the Theosophists of the remote future, but those of the coming millenniums, as those of the past and the present ages, however dissimilar their language may be, they can but radiate the one Eternal Truth, the Truth of the Absolute, the Absolute Truth.

"The Book of the Dead" is a volume embodying and indicating the whole course of the Spiritual Rebirth, but hermetically sealed in every conceivable manner from the gaze of the profane, by mystic writings, teachings, allegories, and myths. All its physical symbols must be psychically interpreted. Divided according to Birch's translation into sixteen books, and in the version of Pierret into one hundred and sixty five chapters, each of those headings, be they of Book or chapter, are so strikingly esoteric that we are surprised to find ourself the first Theosophic interpreter of a volume which, however dumb it may be to the uninitiated, seems to cry aloud to be rightly understood, by those who *know*.

Taking the "Ritual" according to Dr. Birch's division, the sixteen books are arranged in the following mystically and suggestive manner. The first book, entitled "The Manifestation to Light," commencing with "Sayings of Thot"—the Soul speaking in the name of the Father—Osiris ennunciates the preliminary initiation, which, on account of its Hermetic language, would be nearly incomprehensible verbiage without the spiritual key. The "deceased" is henceforth called the "Osiris," and thus identified with the Divinity. Succeeding books then treat of the "Egyptian Creed," the "Re-formation of the Mystic Dead," the "Keeping of the Body," and "Protection in Hell," "Celestial Food," "The Changes," "The Keeping of the Soul," "The going in and out of Hell," "The Hall of Dual Truth," "The Gods of the Orbit," "The Passage to the Soul-Kingdom, or the Birthday of Osiris," the "Names of the Gods," and concluding with a description of the Mystic "House of Osiris"; considered as the most important part of the Occult volume—"none but a King or a Priest may see it."

Investigating the remnants of Egyptian Theosophy, it can be understood that the task of the Christian Gnostics, when they appeared as Reformers, was to simplify and make plain what the Pagans by too great care had complicated. It would appear that the Christian character had subsequently deteriorated and become impregnated with the spirit of awe, accompanying the obscurantive efforts of spiritual conservatism.

In remote antiquity a pre-historic system of Theosophy can be traced, entwined in mystic myths; and to preserve that one great Absolute Truth, the Great Arcanum, that ever esoterically underlies all true religious and philosophic systems, monuments of an Occult symbolical character were erected, as the Cave Temples and the Pyramids. Symbolism was interwoven in language and philosophy, and every art and science was made a vehicle for mystic ideas. The Occult is to be everywhere encountered.

Egyptian Theosophy is so profoundly Hermetic that it is hardly advisable for a tyro to commence his study with that system in any other manner than by a previous perusal of the Book of Hermes. The Occult phraseology used in Egyptian *Hermetic* books (that is, in books relating to the Soul, and given by the Divine understanding,) however easy and familiar it may have been to the ancient Egyptians, is nearly incomprehensible to the modern student; and all that was living spirit to them, is nearly a dead letter to us, unless interpreted with the Spiritual Key.

The "Ritual," or "Book of the Dead," is not the Divine Text book to us that it was to the Ancient Egyptian Initiates. It is a veritably dead book to us, full of unfamiliar names and words, and the student will derive more instruction from a perusal of the writings of Jamblichos and Hermes Trismegistus.

The "*Sai an Sinsin*" is an Occult treatise on the spiritual resurrection and Re-birth that has not yet been fully appreciated. Many so-called Magical texts, given in the "Records of the Past," may also have a more profound Theosophical meaning than modern scholars can discern. There are no doubt many Occult truths hidden in the papyri, but the difficulty to discern and divest them from the unfamiliar names and words in which they are encrusted, discourages many readers from making a thorough and esoteric study.

If the Theosophist is under obligations to the scholar for rendering ancient texts available, he must nevertheless regret that the latter is, in most cases, not acquainted with that key to ancient literature—Theosophy.

To testify that Theosophy was known among the Egyptians, we will give a short extract from Pleytes' translation of the Turin Papyrus, which contains several so-called Magical texts:—

"THE IMPERISHABLE.

"The Self-born, maker of heaven, earth, waters, life, fire, gods, mankind, animals, cattle, reptiles, fishes, kings, all gods, the seasons; whose way I know not, for I know not the path of the gods. Behold Isis, in female form! she embraces myriad gods, she judges myriad spirits. She is not unknown neither in Heaven nor on earth, even as the sun. She makes the Divine on earth, and names herself in her heart, according to her own will, the venerable goddess."

This will bear comparison with an often quoted hymn of Rig Veda, as rendered by Monier Williams:—

"The embodied spirit has a thousand heads,
A thousand eyes, a thousand feet, around
On every side enveloping the earth,
Yet filling space no larger than a span.
He is himself this very universe;
He is whatever is, has been, and shall be:
He is the lord of immortality."

The only difference is, that the Egyptians here worshipped God as Woman (Divine Soul), under the name of Isis, while the Hindus held that the Divine Spirit is the Male Principle. The "Tao-Te-King," however, also teaches that the Female, or Occult, is the Divine Principle.

The Male Principle was, in its spiritual sense, not ignored in Egyptian Theosophy. In a most ancient hymn to Osiris, translated by M. Chabas, Osiris is addressed as the Supreme Being:—

> "Lord of Eternity, King of gods, many are thy names, thy holy transformations, thy mysterious forms in the temples . . . he abides in the human mouth, the creator of the world. Atoum, who among the gods fills the beings with happiness; the benevolent spirit among spirits.
>
> "From him the celestial abyss draws its waters; from him comes the wind and air to breathe and enter the nostrils, for his satisfaction and for the pleasure of his heart.
>
> "He causes the soil to bring forth delicious produce. Heaven and the stars obey him. He opens the great portals; he is the master of invocations in the southern heavens, and of adorations in the northern heavens. . . He is good in will and word, he is the praise of the great gods and the love of the little gods."

The uniformity of the Divine teachings of true Theosophists can be gathered from a comparison of the above with v. 2 & 3, of the sixth Kathaka Upanishad:—

> "The entire Universe moves in the Spirit of Brahma; it is the issue of that Spirit. He is the great fear, the thunderbolt. Those who know this become immortal.
>
> "Through fear of Him the fire burns; through fear of Him the sun shines; through fear of Him the heavens revolve; through fear of Him Death flies;—He the Supreme!"

Yes, this is Pantheism; but Pantheism as the Theosophist understands it, and not as it is misrepresented by the unenlightened Theologian, is the Truth, The Only Truth; while all the stupendous edifice of dogma, erected in ages of spiritual darkness is a monument of superstition and ignorance that at the first ray of spiritual illumination must crumble into the dust. The Truth itself, the Knowledge of The One and All of the Divine Soul and Spirit within us shall abide for ever and aye!

There are several hymns and litanies and other Occult Texts that we could quote to prove conclusively the existence of a far more scientific and exact Theosophy among the Egyptian Initiates than their successors possessed, if it were not for the fact that these Texts would require as explanatory comment an elucidation of the whole system of Egyptian Hermeticism; so we are content to refer the student to the second volume of the "Bibliothèque Orientale," published by Maisonneuve; also the volumes of the "Records of the Past," and the "Book of the Dead," translated by Paul Pierret.*

The Egyptian Hierarchy, the most powerful of its time, had male and female priests, and even kings and queens among them. The priests had a very complicated ritual and were divided into numerous degrees. They wore a distinctive habit, and were obliged to lead a life of strict moderation and purity. They had a speculative religio-philosophic system with an esoteric doctrine that was reserved for Adepts and Initiates only. The "Book of the Dead," which we have already cited as one of their principal Hermetic text-books, is said to describe in the most Mystic and Occult terms they could invent, the Divinization of the individual Soul.*

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* The "Litany of Ra," "Records of the Past," Vol. viii., p. 105, may be consulted as a specimen of Egyptian phraseology.

The theory generally accepted by superficial exoterists, that the books of Hermes were "probably" written by a Neo-Platonic Christian, has been repeated often and emphatically enough. The modern Hermetic Theosophists however, inverting the statement, consider the New Testament as an Hermetic book, and assert that these records were with more probability compiled by a conclave of Neo-Hermetists. Who can tell whether this hypothesis may not yet serve to explain the true origin of Christian Theosophy?

The celebrated Smaragdine Tablet of Hermes is a compendium of the Highest Art, and can be interpreted equally in Alchemy, Magic, and Theosophy as an absolute guide; it reads as follows:—

"It is true without falsehood, certain and absolute. That which is below is as that which is above, and that which is above is as that which is below to accomplish the miracles of one thing.

"And as all things were from one, by the meditation of one, so all born things were from that one thing's adaptation.

"The father thereof is the sun, the mother thereof the moon, the wind carried it in its belly, its nurse is the earth. It is the father of all, and of every perfection in the whole world and its power is perfect if it is changed into earth.

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* An obscure Arabian writer, Ahmed Ben Abubekr Ben Wahshih, in his book "Ancient Alphabets and Hieroglyphic Characters," gives what purports to be an account of the Egyptian Priests, their Classes, Initiation, and Sacrifices; but like most Oriental writers, he seems not to discern the truthful from the marvellous. We refer the curious reader to the English translation by Joseph Hammer for further information. The account given in "Crata Repoa" of the Initiation among the Egyptian Priests, refers to a period when these orders were already in decadence, and endeavoured to replace a spiritual experience by theatrical performance. The Treatise of Jamblichos on the Mysteries is not exclusively Egyptian, but is a most valuable Treatise on Spiritual Science in general.

"Separate the earth from the fire, the subtle from the gross very carefully and with ingenuity. It ascends from the earth into heaven, then again descends into the earth, and receives the force of above and below.

"Thus shalt thou have the glory of the entire world. Then every darkness shall fly before thee.

"This is the force of all forces. It overcomes every subtle thing and penetrates every solid thing.

"Thus is the world created.

"Thence were mirific adaptations, the method of which is here. For this reason am I called Hermes Trismegistus, as I have the knowledge of THE THREE PRINCIPLES of the UNIVERSE.

"Thus is complete my doctrine of the Solar Work."

This compendium of the Hermetic Art has also been called the Hermetic Creed, and as such, being compared with the Church Creed, affords striking points of similitude, which can be gathered from a perusal of those "Creeds" in our "*Occult Texts*."

As a further example of the Theosophic and Occult Wisdom of the ancient Egyptians we refer the reader to the Table of Isis, or Bembine Table, given in "*Occult Texts*," and the following short selection from the first book of Hermes.

"HERMES TO INTELLIGENCE:

"The opinions upon the universe and upon God are numerous and different, and I know not the truth. Enlighten me, O Master, for I can but believe thy revelation."

"INTELLIGENCE TO HERMES:

"Learn, my son, what God and the Universe is. God, Eternity, the World, Time, Generation. God causes Eternity, Eternity causes the World, the World causes Time, Time causes Generation. Good, Beauty, Happiness, Wisdom, are the essence of God. The essence of eternity is identity, that of the world is order, that of time is change, that of generation is life and death. The energies of God are the intelligence and the soul, those of eternity are permanence and immortality, those of the world composition and decomposition, those of time are increase and decrease, those of generation quality."

"Eternity is in God, the world is in eternity, Time is in the world, generation is in Time. Eternity remains fixed in God, the world moves in eternity, time is accomplished in the world, generation is produced in time. The power of God is eternity, the work of eternity is the world, which has not been created at one time, but which is ever being created by eternity. Also will it never perish, for eternity is imperishable, and nothing is lost in the world because the world is enveloped by eternity.

"HERMES:

"And what is the wisdom of God?"

"INTELLIGENCE:

"Good, Beauty, Happpiness, all Virtue and Eternity. In penetrating matter, eternity gives it immortality and permanence, for its generation depends upon eternity as eternity depends upon God. Generation and Time are the two different Natures in heaven. Immovable and incorruptible in heaven, movable and perishable on earth. The soul of eternity is God, the soul of the world is eternity, the soul of the earth is heaven. God is in intelligence, intelligence is in the soul, the soul is in matter and all throughout eternity. The soul fills the universal body that contains all bodies; intelligence and God fill the soul. Fill the internal and envelope the externals. The soul animates the universe; from without, that great and perfect animal, the world; from within all living beings. There on high in heaven she dwells in identity; here below on earth she transforms generation. Eternity sustains the world by necessity, by providence, by nature; the explanation that can be given matters little. God acts in all the universe. His energy is a sovereign power to which nothing human or Divine can be compared. Believe not, Hermes, that nothing below or above is like God; thou wouldst be far from the truth. Nothing resembles to the dissimilar, the sole, the One; and believe not that another shares his power. To which other will you attribute life, immortality, changes? What would it do else? For God is not idle, otherwise all would be repose, for God fills all. Inertia exists not in the world, nor anywhere, neither in the Creator, nor in the creation; it is an empty word. It is necessary that all things should become, for ever, and everywhere. For the Creator is in all, has no particular abode; He creates not one thing or another, but all things; His creative power dwells not in the beings He has created, they remain dependent on Him.

"Were God to separate Himself from His work, life would be withdrawn, and all would be at an end; for He is at once the Creator and the Creation. All is living, life is One, and God is Life. Life is the union of Spirit and Soul; death is the rupture of what was united. Man calls *transformation* Death, because the material body is decomposed and life ceases to be visible or apparent; but, my dear Hermes, you may understand that the world itself is transformed continually; each day some part of it disappears without its ever decomposing. These revolutions and these disappearances are the passions (or phases) of the world. Revolution is a return, disappearance is a renewal. The world contains every form, they are not outside of it, it transforms itself in them. But if every form is in the world, what must be the form of the Creator? He cannot be without form, and if He had but One form, He would be inferior to the world. What then shall we say of Him that we may not say anything imperfect? For one cannot think of God as incomplete. He has a form which is His own, which does not appear to the eyes of the body, but which is in all bodies. Be not astonished that He has an incorporeal form, so it is with the form of a discourse, or the margin of a manuscript which borders the lines, and is even and equal.

"Reflect upon a word which is bold and true; just as man cannot live without Life, so God cannot live without doing good. The life and the movement of God is to move and make live. Some words have a particular sense; reflect then upon what I tell you. All is in God, not as something placed in a place, for the place is corporeal and immovable, and things which are in a place have no movement. God is in the incorporeal otherwise than in appearance. Understand that He contains all; understand that nothing is so rapid, so vast, so strong as the incorporeal; it surpasses everything in capacity, in celerity, in power. Perceive this in yourself—order your Soul to go to India, and it is there quicker than your order; order it to go to the Ocean and it is there at once, not by moving from one place to another, but on the instant. Order it to mount to Heaven, and to do so it requires no wings; nothing will stop it, neither fire nor sun, nor ether, nor whirlwinds, nor the bodies of the stars—it will traverse all, and will fly beyond all bodies. Do you desire to pass this limit and to contemplate what is outside the world, if there is anything, you can do so. See what power, what quickness you possess, and think you that what you can do, God cannot?

"Conceive of God as having in Himself all thoughts, the whole world. If you cannot equal and compare yourself to God, you cannot comprehend Him. Like comprehends like. Enlarge yourself to an immense size, outpass all bodies, traverse all times, become eternity, and you will conceive and understand God. Nothing can prevent you from supposing yourself immortal and all-knowing—Arts, Sciences, the habits of all animals. Lift yourself above all heights, descend below all depths, collect in yourself every sensation of all created things, of water, of fire, of the dry and the wet. Suppose that you are everywhere at the same time, on Earth, in the Sea, in Heaven; that you have never been born, that you are still in embryo, that you are young, old, dead, beyond death; comprehend all things at once, time, place, things, quantities, qualities, and you will comprehend God. But if you shut up your Soul in the body, and if you humble yourself and say, 'I understand nothing, I can do nothing; I neither know what I am nor what I shall be,' what are you in common with God? If you are bad and attached to a body, what can you understand of great and good things? Not to recognise the Divine is the perfection of evil; but to be able to perceive, to desire it, and to hope for it, is the means of reaching it by a direct and easy road. By following it you will see it everywhere: in the place and the hour where you least expect it, in wakefulness and in sleep, at sea, in travelling, by night and by day, in speaking and in keeping silence. For there is not anything but what is the image of God.

"God is not invisible; there is nothing more apparent than God. If He has created all things, it is that we may see Him in and through all things: this is the good of God, this is His virtue, to appear in all, nothing is invisible even amongst the incorporeal—Intelligence is seen in thought, God in creation. This is what I had to reveal to you, Oh, Trismegistus. Look for it in yourself, and you will not lose your way."

The influence Hermetic Theosophy had upon the Genesis of Christianity, and the fact that Christian Theosophy may be considered as a renewal of Ancient Hermeticism, deserves to be attentively studied.

In the first centuries of Christianity the *majority* of enlightened Christians were called Gnostics, and the probabilities are very great that the system now known as the Christian Religion may have originated in Alexandria instead of Jerusalem.

Nearly every one of the sentences attributed to the historical Jesus Christ could be traced to some anterior source. The Gospels (God-spells), considered as compilations of Esoteric Allegory and Theosophic teachings, are really books of Christian Hermeticism; and their authors as well as their hero are, by some, thought to be mythical and allegorical and not historical personages.

The truths set forth in the Gospels as teachings of the Christ are gnostic verities, and no matter by whom they were personally uttered, they are communications of the Word, the Eternal Christ Principle.

It is not improbable that the system of Christian Theosophy may be a compilation of esoteric truths from various sources, carefully concocted for several centuries by an Hermetic Hierarchy. Their propaganda gradually replaced by a more simple Myth and a comprehensive moral and religious system the effete Pagan Institution which, with all its recondite mysteries, no longer answered the wants of the age.

The mob who were following the culte of Osiris or Christ, never knew the esoteric reasons for the religious revolution. The Gnostic Christian Theosophy of the period anterior to the establishment of the Christian State Religion, was totally different to the system of dogma subsequently engrafted upon it. As already observed, there is no doubt that Gnosticism was early Christianity. The Gospel of John is pure Gnosticism.

The Christian Mythos constructed out of Egyptian and Hellenic Hermeticism, Indian, Magian, and Hebrew Theosophy, far from being the teaching of a few uneducated Hebrews, was in all probability the carefully planned system of a Neo-Hermetic secret conclave.

Should the hypothesis of the formulation of the Christian Doctrine at Alexandria be right, the very burning of the Alexandrian Library would go to prove that those certain Hierarchs in the time of Theodosius, who knew the real origin of the Christian system, being anxious to destroy the self-evident sources of the compilation called the New Testament, caused a tumult, during which they burned their own Library and threw the blame upon the mob.

The establishment of the Christian Religion, accompanied by mental and social transitions, not unlike those occurring in the the present age, may at times have been a matter of extreme difficulty, on account of the resistance offered by the more conservative Pagan leaders who were opposed to the new myth, and would persist in upholding Pagan ideas in opposition to the proposed Christian Theosophy, thus giving occasion to violent intestine feuds.

Then, as now, Initiates, striving to guide the unthinking masses from the mazes of error into the path of Truth, were opposed by popular leaders and misleaders. Paganism, with its sensualistic exoterism, was not content to die and allow the Christian system to live. The Christian Gnostics who claimed Soul-Science, were opposed by Pagan Gnostics. The Pagan definitions of Gnosis so increased, that at last the Christian Gnostics, with St. Dionysius at their head, taught a positive Agnosticism in Theosophy, similar to that inculcated by Gotama Buddha, and other ancient Theosophists. In the last chapter of "The Mystic Theology" St. Dionysius probably denies all the definitions of the Pagan Gnostics. (See "*Occult Texts.*")

Christianity, the outcome of a Neo-Hermetic Gnosticism, and opposed to the sensualistic culte that for ages disfigured the ancient religious systems, had in the first centuries of its establishment a hard struggle for existence.

"Gnosis," Individual experience, Knowledge of God, was the Centre, the Great Arcanum, and the Mystic Christ. The sanctuary of Christianity is Theosophy. Christianity would have perished as the ephemeral teachings of the so-called false Messiahs of the Jews, had it not been that it was established by those ignorantly deplored and abused Gnostic Heresies. Gnosis, the sanctuary of Christianity, being attained to by some earnest striving souls, life and reality was given to the new system by their enthusiasm.

"The meaning of the term *Gnosis* or Knowledge, as applied to a system of philosophy, may be illustrated by the language of Plato towards the end of the fifth book of the Republic, in which he distinguishes between knowledge (*gnosis*) and opinion (*doxa*) as being concerned respectively with the real (*to on*) and the apparent (*to phainomenon*)."

". . . This knowledge differs in name only from that 'wisdom' (*sophia*) which Aristotle tells us is by common consent admitted to consist in a knowledge of First Causes or Principles."

". . . Already in the Septuagint translation of the Old Testament, and still more clearly in the Apocryphal Book of Wisdom, the term *gnosis* had been employed to denote a knowledge of the true God, or a knowledge especially given by Him (Ps. cxviii. cxix. 66; Prov. viii. 12, xxx., 3 (xxiv. 26 in *Vat.*); Eccl. ii. 26; Isa. xi. 2; Wisd. ii. 13; vii. 17; x. 10; xiv. 22); and the same term was employed by the writers of the New Testament for that knowledge of God through Christ which is given by the Gospel. The mission of John the Baptist is prophetically declared by his father as to give *knowledge* of salvation to the Lord's people (Luke i. 77). Reference to Gnosis is made in the following texts: I. Cor. i. 5; I. Cor. xii. 8; II. Cor. iv. 6; II. Cor. x. 5; Phil. iii. 8; II Peter, i. 5-6: II. Peter iii. 18; I. Cor. viii. 1.; I. Tim. vi. 20.

"It is probable therefore that the adoption of the terms *Gnosis* and *Gnostic*, as special designations of a philosophy and its professors, arose from the language of Christianity, and was intended to distinguish the Gnostic teaching as the rival and assumed superior of the Christian Church." (Summarised from the Introduction to "The Gnostic Heresies of the First and Second Centuries," by MANSEL.)

The Neo-Hermetic Christ-ideal formed a base of unity for Theosophic ideas, but the truth was not by all accepted. There were those who knew, and those who pretended to know, and it is difficult to discern the real from the counterfeit. There were so many schools who knew, and each one knew best, that the classification of the Gnostics is a subject of some difficulty to modern scholars.

> "Different classifications of Gnostics have been made on various principles. Mosheim treats Gnosticism as produced exclusively by the combination of Oriental philosophy with Christianity. Neander classifies them according to their affinity with or opposition to Judæism; Gieseler, according to countries and the preponderance of dualism or emanation, as Syrian and Egyptian; Matter, as Syrian, Roman, Egyptian, and of Asia Minor; Hase, as Hellenistic, Syrian, and Christian. Baur's classification is:—(1.) The Valentinian, which admits the claims of Paganism, together with Judæism and Christianity. (2.) The Marcionite, which refers especially to Christianity; and (3) the Pseudo Clementine, which espouses the cause of Judæism in particular." (*Globe Cyclopædia.*)

The symbols used by the Gnostics which are in general literally considered, must be spiritually and Theosophically understood as meaning purely stages of the individual Re-birth. Then, when we divide the leading Gnostics into Theosophists and Spirit-Mediums, the Absolute from the Non-Absolute truths can be more easily discerned.

We must always remember that Hermetic Theosophy could only gradually open the doors of the Sanctuary, and these attempts were resisted by the Pagan Hierarchy. The Christianity that is taught by the Church, were it not embued with esoteric ideas, would be as decayed as ancient Paganism. As enunciated by Fichte in his "Anweisung zum seeligen Leben," "Men are saved not by the historical, but by the metaphysical."

The similarity between the ancient Egyptian and subsequent Christian Theosophic symbolism, is undeniable. Isis may be called Mary; Horus, Christ; but the idea underlying these names is the same.

> "The Christ was the Good Shepherd. So was Horus.
> Christ is the Lamb of God. So was Horus.
> Christ is the Bread of Life. So was Horus.
> Christ is the Truth and the Life. So was Horus.
> Christ is the Fan-bearer. So was Horus.
> Christ is the Door of Life. Horus was the Path by which the dead travel out of the sepulchre; he is the god whose name is written as the Road," etc., etc.—Gerald Massey, "Natural Genesis," Vol. ii., p, 404.

The Alexandrian conclave, to whom we probably owe the Christian Mythos, had materials enough for even a far more scientific system than the Theosophy embodied in what is accepted as the New Testament.

Jesus and the Apostles no doubt are historical personages; and Jesus, in as far as he was the Christ, is the Manifestation of God on Earth, the Divine Being, very God and very man, not only to be adored but to be followed. The Death of Jesus is the Mystic Spiritual Death by which all are saved; but only those who live the Christ-Life can have part in that Death.

The Church dogma is indeed based on Mystic Truth, but it is only that Mystic Truth which is the Truth of the Church Dogma. Esoterically understood, these are eternal realities; but their exoteric acceptation is a thing of the past and has no virtue.

Esoteric Christianity was but a continuation of the esoteric Egyptian Theosophy under another name. It was as if the spirit of Hermes Trismegistus inspired the votaries of the new religion to keep to the ancient symbols for the perpetuation of the Eternal Soul Truths.

Still through Egypt's desert places
Flows the lordly Nile;
From its banks the great stone faces
Gaze with patient smile;
Still the pyramids imperious
Pierce the cloudless skies,
And the Sphinx stares with mysterious
Solemn, stony eyes.

But where are the old Egyptian
Demi-gods and kings?
Nothing left but an inscription
Graven on stones and rings.
Where are Helius and Hephoestus,
Gods of eldest eld?
Where is Hermes Trismegistus,
Who their secrets held?

Where are now the many hundred
Thousand books he wrote?
By the Thaumaturgists plundered,
Lost in lands remote.
In oblivion sunk for ever,
As when o'er the land
Blows a storm-wind, in the river
Sinks the scattered sand.

Something unsubstantial, ghostly
Seems this Theurgist,
In deep meditation mostly
Wrapped, as in a mist.
Vague, phantasmal, and unreal
To our thought he seems,
Walking in a world ideal,
In a land of dreams.

Was he one or many, merging
Name and fame in one,
Like a stream, to which, converging,
Many streamlets run?
Till, with gathered power proceeding,
Ampler sweep it takes,
Downward the sweet waters leading
From unnumbered lakes.

By the Nile I see him wandering,
Pausing now and then,
On the mystic union pondering
Between gods and men;
Half-believing, wholly feeling,
With supreme delight,
How the Gods, themselves concealing,
Lift men to their height.

Or in Thebes, the hundred-gated,
In the thoroughfare
Breathing, as if consecrated,
A diviner air;
And amid discordant noises
In the jostling throng,
Hearing far, celestial voices
Of Olympian's song.

Who shall call his dreams fallacious?
Who has searched or sought
All the unexplored and spacious
Universe of thought?
Who, in his own skill confiding,
Shall with rule and line
Mark the border-land dividing
Human and divine?

Trismegistus! three time greatest!
How thy name sublime
Has descended to this latest
Progeny of time!
Happy they whose written pages
Perish with their lives,
If amid the crumbling ages
Still their name survives!

Thine, O priest of Egypt, lately
Found I in the vast
Weed-encumbered, sombre, stately
Grave-yard of the Past;
And a presence moved before me
On that gloomy shore,
As a waft of wind, that o'er me
Breathed, and was no more.

Longfellow.

CHAPTER V.

ORIENTAL THEOSOPHY.

PART I.

THE THEOSOPHY OF THE BRAHMINS, MAGI, AND DRUIDS.

EASTWARD from Egypt, now we take our way to a country equal to Egypt in monumental as in Theosophic grandeur. In India we encounter some of those mazes of Theosophy which we will not attempt to enter, but content ourselves with merely acknowledging their existence. The very people are a mystery. Whence are the Hindus? Are they a race descended from the heights of Tibet, are they a colony from Egypt, or are they a branch of that mysterious pre-historical Atlantian world, which left its colossal vestiges in various cyclopean architectures?

Affirmative arguments could be brought in favour of each of these queries.

For the first theory could be adduced the existence of Buddhist Temples in Tibet, which by competent archæologists are pronounced to be anterior to the present Avater, now exoterically worshipped as Buddha; that is to say, there are colossal Buddhistic Monuments, said to have been built centuries if not millenniums before Gotama Buddha was born into this world. It could also be shown, that prior to Gotama Buddha there was an ancient "Wisdom Religion," and that this pre-historic Buddhism, which only left architectural vestiges, antedates the Vedas, and was the Theosophy of the primitive race that descended into India.

For the Egyptian theory it could be urged that so many striking traits of similarity in the religious and social institutions of Egypt and India, could not be accidental. The Egyptian priests, or Hermesians, were esoterically Theosophists, and exoterically they had a complex system of Polytheism and Idolatry, as also have the Brahmins. The Egyptian priests were in their higher degrees strict Vegetarians, as the high Caste Brahmins now are. The Egyptian order of architecture we also find reproduced at Dawlatabad, Tanjore, and elsewhere, in Temples showing the pyramidal form; while the institution of Caste may, in India, be the reproduction after the Egyptian original.* It has also been philologically shown, that not a few Sanscrit words have their apparent primitive root in the ancient Egyptian language.

The Egyptian hypothesis does not invalidate the

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* Brahminism is a representative remnant of the most ancient social institution, which if we might coin a new word could be called the Hiero-Aristocracy. Has Brahminism a future? We will not attempt a reply to this query, which would have to take into consideration the most weighty social and psychic problems that have agitated man's mind ever since the human race existed. Brahminism is not yet dead; there is still life in the ancient tree, though a Buddha failed in the attempt to cut it down more than two millenniums ago. It is but by new, and more powerful attacks, caused by a universal spiritual influx, that the barriers of Caste shall fall to rise no more. All shall be of one Caste when all are equally pure. But when will this Utopian universal Aristocracy of God appear on earth?

Atlantian theory, but renders it all the more probable, as the traits of similarity existing between the systems of Egypt, India, Persia, Mexico, and Peru, justify the suggestion that they may all be derived from one primeval system which flourished on the lost Continent of Atlan.

India can be said to be as rich in pre-historical monuments as Egypt. In Ellora, Elephanta, Salsette, and Carli, we encounter those famed Cave-Temples whose date of construction has been as little ascertained as their gigantic symbolism. A disquisition on the Hindu Cave-Temples and interpretation of their symbolism would, in itself, demand several volumes. Not only in India, but in Cabul, Tibet, Ceylon, and Borneo are the remains of temples and pagodas to be seen, bearing all the mystic traits and emblematical figures of that pre-historic system of Hermetic Theosophy which once united all Initiates into one esoteric Brotherhood, while the people of the outer world were divided into clans and tribes.

The Vedas and the Theosophic poems Ramayana and Mahabarat may be considered among the volumes of the Occult as colossal as are the Ancient Hindu Temples among architectural monuments. They astound and humiliate us by their very enormousness, and the inscrutable profundity of thought. Without the esoteric key they are sealed to the Neophite, and however he may admire the outer structure, the Sanctuary is closed to him, and he may pass it by unconscious of its very existence.

The following is an example of a profound Hindu allegory:—

"The theory of the Hindu theologians is, according to Colebrook, that—

> "There is one Supreme Unrevealed Being—*Para-Brahm.* By self-contemplation he produced the universe. Then, as Siva, or Maha-Deva, he destroyed it; then, as Vishnu, he restored and henceforth sustained it. This is the Hindu Trinity—the Trimurti. Its holy, inexpressible name is the sacred tri-literal word *A U M.*"

"This doctrine," say the Hindus, "is so mysterious, that neither man nor angel can understand it."

To *understand* it, one must be at One with God, for this is the Great Arcanum of Theosophy in all its simplicity. It is a purely Theosophic Doctrine, and esoterically relates to the Regenerative process within us. The Supreme Unrevealed Being is the God within us. By self-contemplation, man, or rather this Divinity in man, produces the Universe of Mind, the mental, sensual world, the aggregate of visualized and sensualized impressions that he has acquired from childhood upwards. Then this God within us, manifested as Siva or Maha-Deva, destroys the Universe of the Sensual Mind. He destroys it in order that as the Divine Spirit he may restore and sustain it as a pure, harmonious Divine World. Thus this Trimurti is really within us, even as the Kingdom of Heaven is within us.

There is but One Mystery, one Secret, and that is the Divine Being, and how it can from being Occult become Manifest. This One Great Arcanum of all Theosophies is the centre from which all Divine Revelations and Manifestations emanate, and they are but Revelations and Manifestations of the Divine within us. All Revealed Words are but Words of the Word—the Divine Logos. Thus are the "Vedas" not the "Word" but Words of and about the "Word," and only as such are they with all other "Sacred Words" Divine.

"The Veda, 'Divine Knowledge,' is divided into Mantras, *i.e.*, texts, and Brahmanas, or comments. To the latter are added mystical treatises, in prose and verse, called Aranyakas and Upanishads, 'which speculate upon the nature of spirit and of God, and exhibit a freedom of thought and speculation which is (assumed as) the beginning of Hindu philosophy.' 'All the Vedic writings are classified in two great divisions, exoteric and esoteric: the Karma-kanda, 'department of works,' the ceremonial; and the Jnana-kanda, 'department of knowledge.' The hymns and prayers of the Mantra come under the first; the philosophical speculations of the Brahmanas, and especially of the Upanishads, under the second division. All are considered alike *Sruti* or revelation."*

"The literature of India," says Professor Max Müller, "is saturated with the idea of a book-revelation; and in no country has the theory of revelation been so minutely elaborated as in India. . . . According to the orthodox view of Indian theologians, not a single line of the Veda was the work of human authors. The whole Veda is, in some way or other, the work of the Deity; and even those who received the revelation, or, as they express it, those who saw it, were not supposed to be ordinary mortals, but beings above the level of common humanity, and less liable, therefore, to error in the reception of revealed truth. The views entertained of revelation by the orthodox theologians of India, are far more minute and elaborate than those of the extreme advocates of verbal inspiration in Europe. The human element, called *paurusheyatva* in Sanscrit, is driven out of every corner or hiding-place; and as the Veda is held to have existed in the mind of the Deity before the beginning of things,† every allusion to historical events, of which there are not a few, is explained away with a zeal worthy of a better cause."

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* Cf. Dowson, Classical Dicionary of Hindu Mythology, etc. Article Veda.

† A similar view prevails in rabbinical orthodoxy with regard to the Thora.

The same able scholar also remarks :—

"The only sphere in which the Indian mind finds itself at liberty to act, to create, and to worship, is the sphere of Religion and Philosophy; and nowhere have religious and metaphysical ideas struck root so deep in the minds of a nation as in India. The shape which these ideas took amongst the different periods of civilisation, naturally varies from coarse superstition to sublime spiritualism. But, taken as a whole, history supplies no second instance where the inward life of the soul has so completely absorbed all the other faculties of a people."

Thus Hindu Philosophy is, to a certain extent, merely the reflection of Hindu Theosophy; and many of the philosophic systems of India can be said to have an esoteric root, and to be branches of Theosophy.

"The Hindu schools of philosophy are usually cast in the following order :—

1. The Nyaya, founded by Gautama.
2. The Vaiseshika, by Kanada.
3. The Sankhya, by Kapila.
4. The Yoga, by Patanjali.
5. The Mimansa, by Jaimini.
6. The Vedanta, by Badarayana; sometimes called Vyasa, or Veda Vyasa.

"They are called the six Sastras, or writings of authority, and sometimes the six Darsanas, views, or exposition of doctrine." *(Davies' "Hindu Philosophy.")*

Of the Darsanas, as the Indian Philosophic Schools are called, the Nyaya excels in analytical enquiry into all the objects and subjects of human knowledge, including, amongst others, the process of reasoning and laws of thought: a kind of Hindu Aristotelianism. The Vaiseshika is a supplement to the Nyaya, carrying its method to Physical enquiries. The Sankhya, Yoga, and Vedanta are nearly altogether Theosophical systems, as a perusal of the Aphorisms of Kapila, the Yoga-Sutras of Patanjali, and the Atma-Bodha of Sankara, will convince. If the Student will also undertake the task of reading the Upanishads, and the Brahma-Sutras of Badarayana,* he will be able thereby to initiate himself into Hindu Theosophy, and acquire a knowledge of important psychic facts, that everyone who desires the welfare of his Soul should be aware of.

While the Yoga appears as the most practical, the Vedanta is the most scientific of the Hindu Theosophic systems. "Vedanta" means "end of the Veda"; and as it is based upon the Upanishads, which the reader knows to be a part of the Vedas, it forms the Sanctuary of Brahmanism.

This Sanctuary, to which we Europeans have access, is, however, closed to the masses of the Hindus themselves; who, being misled to take symbols for things, are lost in the mazes of Exoterism, Polytheism, and Idolatry. Only few know that the names of the many Gods are merely names of the attributes of the One Divine Being. The masses erroneously think there are many Lords. Although one particular God or name may be highly exalted in a Mantra, "nothing is said to disparage the Divine character of the other Gods"; for it is simply the representation of the Divine Spirit under a particular form.

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* Translated by Banerjea in the "Bibliotheca Indica."

Thus Agni, Indra, Surya, Varuna, &c., have their occult meaning, and are symbols for positive Theosophic Elements. Although the Initiates who invented these names made some of them synonymous with physical forces, these exclusively spiritual teachers could not inculcate the materialistic ideas attributed to them by modern, so-called, "competent" scholars; as such ideas are but the outcome of the present materialistic age, but were neither known nor respected in the pre-historic ages we refer to, when all science was comprised in the one word—Spirituality.

Hindu Theosophy is one of the most important Theosophies known. In order that the Student may have an opportunity of becoming acquainted with some of the text books of its leading systems, a selection from the *Bhagavata-Purana*, translated from the French version of Burnouf, follows, elucidating the principles of the Sankhya Theosophy. The Vedanta and Yoga will be found represented in our "*Occult Texts.*"*

The following ample quotations from the rare and expensive French version of the Bhagavata-Purana are given in full, as being the gist of Theosophic teachings contained in that valuable work known only to Oriental scholars, by whom these treasures are as yet hardly appreciated:—

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* For a more thorough comprehension of the latter we would recommend a study of "The Yoga Philosophy; being the text of Patanjali, with Bhojarah's commentary, with Introduction by Colonel Olcott," published by the Bombay Branch of the Theosophical Society.

SELECTIONS FROM THE BHAGAVATA-PURANA.

THE PRACTICE OF DEVOTION.

Bhagavata (the Divine Being) says:

The Yoga that has the Supreme Spirit for its object is established by Me, as the means that men have to obtain Absolute Beatitude; and it is thereby that good and bad fortune are terminated.

Behold! the Doctrine I am about to expound to you, is the same that I have already communicated to the Rishis desirous of knowing the Yoga in the perfection of all its parts.

The heart is known to be as equally qualified to enchain as to liberate the Individual Soul. Attached to qualities it is a chain; devoted to Purusha (the Divine Spirit) it is a means of deliverance.

When freed from the defilements of desire, from cupidity, and other passions that are engendered by selfishness, the heart is pure; insensible to pain and pleasure, and in perfect quiessence.

Then man beholds the Absolute Spirit as superior to Nature, uniform, self-luminous, subtle, and continuous;

With a devoted heart he beholds it by his science, as detached from all things; he beholds it completely impassable, and he understands then that Nature is without energy.

No, for Yogis there is no path that can so happily conduct them to the possession of Brahma, as the devotion that applies itself to Bhagavat, the Soul of all things.

Wise men know that attachment to things is the chain of the Soul which is indestructible; but this very attachment, when; applied to virtue, is an infallible medium of Salvation.

The patient, the compassionate for all beings, who are not at enmity with any, and are calm, good, and adorned by virtue who with exclusive affection, have for Me a profound devotion; who for Me renounce their works, renounce if necessary their parents and families; who are freed from the various kinds of suffering because their heart is directed towards Me; who, having purified themselves, listen to, and recount as examples the lives of those who had Me for their object.

These are the virtuous men, O my mother;* the men free from all attachment; thou shouldst seek them, for intercourse with them frees from sinful attachment to the world.

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* This is supposed to be a dialogue between the Divinely inspired Adept and his mother.

The man who has arrived at entire detachment, by a Devotion exclusively contemplating the works of My power, and the happiness that the senses give in this and the other world, when practising Yoga should employ all his energy to seize his Spirit by the direct ways of this Doctrine.

With indifference for the qualities of Nature; with a knowledge, developed by the detachment from all things; with the practice of Yoga, and a Devotion directed towards Me, man, even while in the mortal body, arrives to possess Me; I, that am the Essence of the Individual Soul.

Devahuti said: What is that Devotion which is due to Thee, and tell me how must I apply to it that I may quickly possess Thy state, that of the Supreme Deliverance?

That Yoga whereof Thou hast spoken, O Thou who art that self-same Deliverance; that Yoga which has Bhagavat for its object, and wherefrom results the Knowledge of the Principles, what is it and what are its parts?

Explain me all this, in distinct manner, O Hari! that I, who am but a woman of slow intelligence, may easily comprehend, by Thy favour, that which is otherwise difficult to comprehend.

Knowing thus the desire of his mother, Kapila, full of affection for her, taught her the Doctrine wherein are enumerated the principles called Sankyha, which contain the Devotion and Yoga.

Bhagavat said: When the senses, those luminous organs, whose office it is to seize the qualities, acting in conformity with the Divine Law, direct themselves in the man whose heart is fixed towards the Being whose manifestation is the Good; when their action is natural, is disinterested, it is then that the Devotion for Bhagavat exists; a virtue more important than perfection, and which consumes the envelope of the Spirit as quickly as the breath of life causes food to digest. . . . .

Finally, summarises Bhagavat, only a heart that gives itself to Me, and attaches itself to Me fixedly, by the practice of an ardent devotion, can give man true happiness.

ACQUISITION OF DELIVERANCE.

Bhagavat said: I will explain to you, daughter of the king, the definition of Yoga, that has Vishnu (Re-birth) for its object, and will tell you by what means a pure heart can enter the path of virtue.

It is to fulfil your duties according to your power; to abstain from all strange duties; to content yourself with what Destiny brings; to honour those who know the Spirit.

It is to renounce vulgar duties, and love only those which conduct to Salvation. Partake of little but pure food, and seek the healthy and retired spots.

Be good and truthful; abstain from theft, and receive no presents but for necessities; be chaste and pure; give yourself up to a life of penitence; read the Vedas and adore Purusha.

Observe an absolute silence; . . gradually master the breath; detach the senses from visible objects, and draw them within by aid of the heart.

With the heart maintain the vital breath immovably in one of the divers places of the body where it resides; . . . place yourself in possession of yourself.

These, together with others, are the paths whereby the wise master of his breath, must, by Yoga, with his intelligence, gradually overcome all sinful and evil inclinations of the heart.

Indifferent to the manner of sitting, let him sit in a pure spot; there place himself erect, keeping a decent posture, and exercise the retention of his breath.

Let him purify the way of the vital breath, by inhaling the exterior air, retaining it, then allowing it to issue; and repeating this practice inversly, he then fixes his heart in solid manner to make its mobility cease.

The heart of the Yogi, who has mastered his vital breath, soon becomes pure from all passion, as a metal is freed from dross when submitted to a current of air and fire.

Let him consume his corporeal vices, by retaining his respiration; his sins, by becoming master of his heart; his inclinations for sensual objects, by collecting his senses to himself; and the qualities that deflect the Supreme Being, by meditation.

When the heart, purified from all passion, has been completely arrested by the practice of Yoga; let the ascetic, fixing his eyes upon the end of his nose, meditate upon the form of Bhagavat.

When thus abstracted from all objects, the heart knows no more what to hold; and detached from all, it is also consumed similar to the flame that expires. In this state man, thence protected from the influence of qualities, beholds his own Spirit, with which he is at one and no more distinct from it.

Thus absorbed by this final annihilation of the heart in the bosom of Supreme Majesty, man, placed out of the reach of pleasure and pain, infers the origin of that double imperfection to personality, to this cause of action which does not really exist, as he has seized in his own bosom the substance of the Supreme Spirit.

Having thus arrived to an understanding of that which constitutes his own being, the Perfect pays no more attention to his own body; and although by the rule of fate the body may lift itself up, while he has quitted or again entered it, yet he no more distinguishes it than a man blinded by intoxication perceives the state of his garments about him.

The body, nevertheless, acting under the rule of fate, continues to live with the senses as long as the action lasts which it has commenced; but the man who has attained to the end of his contemplation has understood the Real, and has no more contact with the body, which, as all that thereon depends, is to him but as a vain dream.

Even as man is distinct from his children and his wealth, although he regards these as another self, thus is the Spirit distinct from the body and other things.

Even as the fire is distinct from the burning log, or the spark from the smoke it produces, although these things are regarded as forming part of its nature; thus the Spirit, that internal spectator, is distinct from elements, senses, and personality, as Brahma is from the individual Soul and Bhagavat from Nature.

With a heart estranged from all other things, man sees that Spirit in all beings, and all beings in that Spirit, which is for all beings the Soul.

As the fire which is one, appears many through the diversity of substances that feed it, so the spirit residing in the bosom of Nature appears as many, through the unequal distribution of qualities that compose the bodies wherein it is enclosed.

Also it is only after having triumphed over Nature, so difficult to overcome, by that Divine Energy to which it is united, and which is that which exists as well as that which exists not, that the Spirit reposes on the bosom of its veritable form.

DISTINCTION OF NATURE.

Liberated from the conditions which bind intelligence; having rejected from his sight everything else but the Soul, having seized hold of his Spirit, . . . and seeing himself face to face—

The wise man perceives in the midst of his personality, that really does not exist, a reflection of The Being, that he beholds free from attributes, allied to the Cause, enlightening the effect, contained in all things and One.

Even as by seeing in a closed house the disc of the sun reproduced on the wall, it is inferred that the reflection was caused by water; and so, the sun is in the heavens; in this same way triune Personality is inferred from the existence of the elements by the heart and senses acting as reflectors, and from Personality in its turn is concluded the Self-Existing Being reflecting itself in the spirit that sees the truth.

When, in this world, the elementary particles, the senses, the Intelligence, and other faculties have been annihilated by profound sleep on the bosom of the Cause that exists not for our organs; the man who then escapes sleep and personality, and who erroneously thinks because his personality disappears, that his soul, that does not perish, is annihilated, is even as one who believes himself to be dead because he has lost his riches.

This man, if he collects within himself his reflection, and seizes it in his own bosom, he attains to his own real Essence, which is the dwelling-place of the being endowed with personality.

THE YOGA OF DEVOTION.

The Yoga of Devotion divides itself into as many species as the means employed in practising it, for the inclinations of men are as varied as the individual natures with their divers qualities.

The rash man believing in distinction, who in thoughts of violence, of hypocrisy, or envy, shows affection for Me, is a being delivered up to darkness.

The man who is attached to distinction, who dreaming of externals, of glory, or power, honours Me with a culte or other homage, is a being delivered up to passion.

The man equally attached to distinction, who with the view of annihilating his works, or of directing them towards the Supreme Being, celebrates the Sacrifice, saying to himself, "Sacrifice is a duty," is a being that participates of the quality of goodness.

The motion of a heart that, as the Ganges going to the sea, is incessantly drawn towards Me, Me the refuge of all Souls, by the one desire of hearing the reciting of my qualities, thus this is the sign of the pure Yoga of Devotion to the best of Spirits, and is disinterested devotion that no longer distinguishes itself from Me.

Those who are animated with this Spirit would not accept the happiness to live in the same world as I, to have the same greatness, to be in My presence, to have the same form, and yet not to be other than at one with Me, should it be offered to them without adoring Me.

Therein is that which is called the Yoga of Devotion, a Yoga which is definite, and which assists man to surmount the three qualities, and unites them infallibly to My nature.

By absolute and disinterested accomplishment of that which forms the individual duty of each, by irreproachable observance of the ceremonies, by constant absence of all disposition to injure, by sight and touch of the forms wherein I abide, by culte, praise, homage addressed to them, by the faith in My presence in the bosoms of beings, by virtue and detachment, by profound respect shown to Sages, by compassion felt for the unfortunate, by the friendship shown for those in whom one discovers the same qualities as in one's self, and by the practice of virtue and religious duties, by attention lent to discourses relating to the Supreme Spirit, by reciting My name, by rectitude, by intercourse with good men, by absence of selfishness, by all these virtues the spirit of man that follows My law, ascending to the state of perfect purity, has but to hear of the recitation of My qualities to unite himself at once to My essence.

As a scent lifted by the wind from the place of its origin takes possession of the sense of smell, so the spirit that attaches itself to Yoga arrives at seizing himself in his own immovable Essence.

I reside perpetually in the bosom of all beings of which I am the Soul; the man who knows Me not as such has but the false image of piety.

He who neglects Me—the sovereign Lord, the Soul of all beings in whose bosom I reside—to fulfil in his folly religious duties, sacrifices but to ashes.

The heart of the man who is selfish and attached to distinction, who hates Me in the body of another, and who has an aversion for his fellow-creatures, attains not to Quiescence.

No, I am not satisfied with a sacrifice celebrated with the most varied substances, when he who offers it to Me despises living beings.

Let man, in accomplishing the works imposed upon him, render Me a religious culte and other homages, as long as he has not arrived at seeing Me in his heart; Me, the Supreme Lord, who resides in the bosom of all beings.

He who, attached to distinction, and perceives the least difference between his Soul and the Supreme Being, must fear the most terrible danger from Mrityu, who is no other than I.

Also, man should honour Me, who reside in the bosom of all beings of which I am the Soul, by offerings, by respect and love, without making any distinction.

The beings that have life are superior to those who have it not; those who have the vital breath are superior to those who have life; those who have intelligence, to those who have the vital breath; those who possess organs of sense, to those who have intelligence.

Among those who possess organs of sense, those who have the sense of taste are superior to those who have only that of feeling; then come those who have the sense of smell, and above these are those who perceive sound.

Above these latter come those who perceive diverse forms, then those who have a double row of teeth; among which those that have many feet are superior to others; then come those that have four feet; and finally man, who has but two.

Above man are four classes. Among them, the first is that of the Brahmans; among the Brahmans themselves, the first are those that know the Vedas, and among these latter those that possess the meaning.

Above these who possess the meaning of the Vedas comes he for whom this meaning has nothing dubious; above this latter, he who accomplishes the works that are imposed on him; then he who, detached of all, does not disquiet himself about the result of his works.

Above this latter is he who, after having directed towards Me all his actions, the consequences of his actions and his very person, does not distinguish himself from Me; for I see no being superior to a man who, having directed his soul towards Me, and deposited in Me his works, acts no more and sees no more than Me in himself.

Let the sage venerate in his heart all those things with great respect, saying: "It is Bhagavat, the Supreme Being, that here is entered with the individual soul, part of its substance."

I have explained to thee, O virtuous woman, the Yoga of Devotion and the Yoga of Meditation, these two doctrines by which man arrives equally unto Purusha.

This form of Bhagavat, which is Brahma and Paramatman, forms that which is at the same time the Supreme Being, Nature, and Destiny; whereof result the diverse consequences of works.

That which is the divine receptacle of diverse forms; this is Time, which is the terror of beings emanated from Intelligence, when they attach themselves to distinction.

He, who after having penetrated into the bosom of creatures, destroys them by other creatures; that Being of whom the Universe is the abode, and which is named Vishnu, this supreme chief of the sacrifice is Time, the most potent of those that rule.

For him there is neither friend, nor enemy, nor ally. Always watchful, he seizes man, who thinketh not of him, to terminate his existence.

It is by fear of Time that the wind blows; by fear of Time that the sun radiates; by fear of Time that Indra gives rain; by fear of Time that the hosts of stars shine.

It is by fear of Time that the kings of the forests, with the sheltering trees and annual plants, each cover themselves in their season with flower and fruit.

It is by fear of Time that the rivers flow, that the ocean passes not its boundaries, that the fire burns, that the earth with her mountains fall not into the abyss.

It is by His order that the atmosphere gives a habitable abode to breathing beings; that intelligence developes the world that is its body and which it surrounds with seven enfoldments.

And the Devas, to whose empire belong the movable and immovable worlds, give themselves up to their qualities for the creation, conservation, and destruction of the universe, through the rule by Time.

This is Time Infinite, and which ends all. That is without beginning and makes all beginning, which is imperishable, which produceth creature by creature, and which destroys by death the God of destruction.

Among the Text-books of Hindu Theosophy and Occult Science the following are considered the most notable, viz: The "Vedas," namely: The "Rig-Veda," "Yayur-Veda," "Sama-Veda," and "Atharva-Veda." The celebrated epics called the "Ramayana," the "Mahabharata," the "Harivanso" (said to be a part of the Mahabharat).

The "Puranas," namely: The "Vishnu," "Naradiya," "Bhagavata," "Garuda," "Padma," and "Varaha." These latter are Vaishnava Puranas, in which the Divine as Vishnu "the unconquerable preserver" and all-pervading essence holds the pre-eminence. The Puranas, in which the qualities of gloom or ignorance are described, are—the "Matsya," "Kurma," "Linga," "Siva," "Skanda," and "Agni." These are devoted to the Divine as Siva, the destroyer of Evil. Those in which the psychic forces, known to the unregenerate only as passions, are delineated, are—The "Brahma," "Brahmanda," "Brahmavaivarta," "Markandeya," "Bhavishya," and "Vamana" Puranas, which describe the manifestations of Brahma, the Divine Spirit.

The "Upa," or Secondary Puranas, eighteen in number, viz: "Sanat-Kumara," "Nara-Sinha," "Naradiya," "Siva," "Durvasasa," "Kapila," "Manava," "Ausanasa," "Varuna," "Kalika," "Samba," "Nandi," "Saura," "Parasara," "Aditya," "Mahesvara," "Bhagavata," and "Vasishta."

We are also assured that the "Tantras" are misunderstood occult texts, although they are in current use only for magical evocations and other practices of Goetia. The "Brahmana," which has been aptly called a kind of Hindu Talmud, embodies works composed by and for Brahmins, but is, equally with the

Mantra, held to be "Sruti" or revealed word. Each of the Sanhitas or collections of the Vedas has its Brahmana, which generally maintains the essential character of the Veda to which it belongs. The Brahmana is especially connected with the Ritual and Liturgy, and contains the details of Vedic ceremonies, with long explanations of their origin and meaning, and abounds with curious legends, Divine and human, in illustration.* The "Satapatha Brahmana," translated in the "Sacred Books of the East," may be consulted as a specimen of the "Brahmana" literature.

The "Upanishads" esoteric doctrine, about 150 works, probably even more; of these the most authoritative ones, ten in number, form, with their Commentaries by Sankara Acharya, the corner-stone of Brahmanical Theosophy. The object of these treatises is to ascertain the Mystic sense of the text of the Veda, and so they enter into such abstruse questions as The Origin of the Universe, The Nature of the Deity, The Nature of Soul, and The Connection of Mind and Matter.

Of the Darsanas or philosophic schools, Madhava-Acharya in the "Sarva-Darsana-Samgraha" enumerates eighteen systems, viz: the Charvaka, Bauddha, Arhata or Jaina, Ramanuja, Purna-prajna, Nakulisa-Pasupata, Saiva, Pratyabhijna, Rasesvara, Paniniya, Vaiseshika or Aulukya, Akshapada or Nyaya, Jaiminiya, Sankhya, Patanjala, and Vedanta. The last six systems are generally accepted, and have an esoteric base. Theosophic directions can also be gleaned from the "Sacred Law-books" as the "Manu-Sanhita" commonly called the "Code of Manu," and also from the "Institutes of Vishnu," and the "Sacred Laws" of Apastamba, Gautama, Vasishtha, and Baudhayana. Even the "Sacred Books" of Hindu Sectarians, as the "Adhi-Granth" of the Sikhs, are found to be replete with Theosophy. If Materialism is the leading characteristic of Western Modern Science and Philosophy, the chief trait of Oriental Wisdom is its Spirituality.

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* *Cf.* "Dowson's Dictionary."

THE THEOSOPHY OF THE MAGI.

A symbolism of a different character from that of Egypt and India, a kind of ante-Buddhistic Buddhism, meets us in ancient Persia.

"Persia has no caste. All are equal from a religious point of view. All are equally called *the Pure.* Each one is a priest, officiating for his own household.

"Persia has no temples, no other religious ceremonies than prayer and word. No mythology; no imaginative poetry. All is true, positive, serious, and strong. Force in Holiness : Note there a precocious vigour of wisdom and good sense. Fire is no more a god but a symbol, the benevolent genius of the hearth.

"The animal is not glorified, but loved, well and magnanimously treated, according to its rank in the house, its place in the scale of souls.

"The simple, and in all things humane, law Persia left—that nothing has surpassed the ever living law, and which ever remains the path of the future—that is heroic agriculture, the courageous effort of good against evil, the life of pure light in work and justice.

"Thence the morals of the man and the worker—not the idler, the Brahmin, or the monk—a morality not of abstention and dreaming, but of active, fruitful energy. It is all comprised in: Be pure to be strong. Be strong to be pure." (Michelet, *La Bible de l'Humanité.*)

Persian Theosophy is aspirational and intellectual striving—as can be gleaned from the *Avesta* and most of the *Pahlavi Scriptures.* Each and every Initiate is a soldier of Light, fighting for Good against Darkness and Evil. But that the Supreme Good, the Supreme Knowledge, is attained by the individual becoming united with the Supreme Omnipresent Being, this is taught in the "Desatir," where the Unity of Man and God is beautifully expressed. This book is not recognised by modern *Savants*, but let it speak for itself:

"The Deity said:

"Me thou seest, Me thou hearest, Me thou smellest, Me thou tasteth, Me thou touchest.

"What thou sayest that I say; and thy acts are My acts, and I speak by thy tongue, and thou speakest to Me. . . .

"Thou wilt be asked, By what dost thou know God?

"Say, By what descendeth on the heart.

"For could that be proved false, Souls would be utterly helpless.

"There is in thy soul a certain knowledge, which if thou display it to mankind they will tremble like a branch agitated by the strong wind. . . .

"If thou be asked, Hast thou seen God?

"Say, How should I know a God whom I never saw? I would not enjoin the worship of a God whom I could not show.

"The Wise hold the existence of created things as a proof of the being of God.

"And Thou, by the light of the Creator, seest and shewest what is created. . . .

"I created the world an individual.

"The world is an idea of the Self-existent.

"Non-existence is the mirror of existence.

"Without the light of the Self-existent Nothing is.

"His Light extendeth over all, and conferreth being on all existences.

"The choicest of all effulgences is the shining of knowledge on men of understanding.

"By a single flash of the Creator both worlds became visible.

"The multiplicity of worlds, invisible and visible, is unity in respect to the unity of God, for nothing else has being.

"The Perfect seeth unity in multiplicity, and multiplicity in unity."

If the extract just given sets forth the Descent of the Divine to the human, the following summary of Occult Knowledge delineates the ascent of the human to the Divine :—

"Excellence, Worthiness, Beneficence, Goodness,* must be comprehended! must be comprehended! must be comprehended! must be comprehended! must be comprehended!

"Godhead, Unity, Perfection, Attributes! must be comprehended! &c.

"Life, Knowledge, Desire, Power, must be comprehended!

"The Word of God, the Book of God, the Angel of God, the Prophet of God, must be comprehended!

"Oldness, Newness, Stability, Instability, must be comprehended!

"The World, its Inhabitants, the Free, the Dependent, must be comprehended!

"Intelligence, Soul, Heaven, Stars, must be comprehended!

"Fire, Air, Water, Earth, must be comprehended!

"The nature of the Elements, their principle, their form, and phenomena, must be comprehended!

"Mineral, Vegetable, Animal, Human kind, must be comprehended!

"Reward, Punishment, Heaven, Hell, must be comprehended!

"Merit, Crime, Love, Anger, must be comprehended!

"The Prophet, the Prophet's successor, the Enquirer, the Wise, must be comprehended! must be comprehended! must be comprehended! must be comprehended!"

(From the Book of the Prophet Jyafrâm.)

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* These are four Persian words, Hamesteni, Ramesteni, Shamesteni, Famesteni, all signifying Good.

Although the foregoing may to some read like the chorus from an opera, there is more wisdom in it than lies on the surface, and it may be equally taken as a guide to material, as to Spiritual Knowledge and Power, not an imaginative, poetical one, but a mere epitome of Physical and of Psychic facts.

The institution of the system of the Magi was a revolt against Demon-Worship. The Devas, whom the Hindus worshipped as Gods, the Magi designated as demons, which did not detain them, however, from having intercourse with spirits in their groves, and at their altars.

The Magian system made a great division between Divine and Demonic. When Ahura Mazda (Ormazd) and Angra Mainyu (Ahriman) are considered under the Theosophical aspect, as they were intended to be by the Adepts, with whom this system originated, as the Divine and Demonic in Man, then the Magian system is a mode of thought embodying the highest truths attainable.

> "The substance of the law is the command, *Think purely, speak purely, and act purely.* All that comes from Ormazd is pure, from Ahriman impure, and bodily purity has a like worth with moral purity. Hence the multitude and minuteness of precepts concerning bodily cleanliness. In fact, the whole liturgic worship turns greatly on this point."—(*Cf.* J. F. CLARKE, "Ten Great Religions.")

The Theosophist, as a true eclectic, hails with satisfaction the translations of the Zend and Pahlavi Scriptures of this most interesting system of Theosophy, which well rewards the earnest student for the researches he may undertake therein.

But these studies should be carried on not only in a Theosophic but also in a true scholarly spirit, and the study of the Avesta should be preceded by an acquaintance with the Vedas.

"We begin to see a natural progress, and almost a logical necessity," says Professor Max Müller, "in the growth of these three systems of worship. The oldest, most primitive, most simple form of Aryan faith finds its expression in the Veda. The Zend-Avesta represents *in its language as well as in its thoughts* a branching off from that more primitive stem; a more or less conscious opposition to the worship of the gods of nature, as adored in the Veda, and a striving after a more spiritual, supreme, moral Deity, such as Zoroaster proclaimed in Ormazd. Buddhism, lastly, marks a decided schism, a decided antagonism against the established religion of the Brahmans, a denial of the true Divinity of the Vedic Gods, and a proclamation of new philosophical and social doctrines.

"Without the Veda, therefore, neither the reforms of Zoroaster nor the teachings of Buddha would have been intelligible: we should not know what was behind them, or what forces impelled Zoroaster and Buddha to the founding of new religions; how much they received, how much they destroyed, how much they created.

"The Dews or Daêvas of the Avesta are demons, in the Vedas they are gods. On the other hand, the Ahuras, or gods of the Avesta, are Asuras or demons, in the Vedic belief. The original land of the race is called Aryavesta in the 'Laws of Manu' (II., 22), and Aryana Vaêjo in the Avesta. The God of the Sun is named Mithra, or Mitra, in both religions. The Yima of the Parsi system is a happy king; the Yama of the Hindus is a stern judge in the realms of death. The dog is hateful in the Indian system, an object of reverence in that of Zoroaster. Both the religions dread defilement through the touch of dead bodies. In both systems fire is regarded as divine. But the most striking analogy perhaps is to be found in the worship paid by both to the intoxicating fermented juice of the plant *Asclepias Acida*, called Soma in the Sanskrit and Homa in the Zend. . . .

"It would seem, therefore," concludes Mr. Clarke, in "*Ten Great Religions*," from which book this quotation is taken, "that the two religions setting out from the same point, and having a common stock of primitive traditions, at last said each to the other, 'Your Gods are my Demons.' The opposition was mutual. The dualism of the Persian was odious to the Hindu, while the absence of a deep moral element in the Vedic system shocked the solemn Puritanism of Zoroaster. The religion of the Hindu was to dream, that of the Persian to fight. There could be no more fellowship between them than there is between a quaker and a Calvinist."

The war between Ahura Mazda and Angra Mainyu is purely spiritual, and is carried on in every individual Soul, and describes the striving of the Pure and Impure, the Good and Evil, the God and Demon, in man. Originally man is created as God. The Primitive Man is as God, the Supreme I Am, an Unself. The becoming a Demon, a *Selfish* Being, is the fall from the Divine State, concomitant to which the Divine becomes latent, Light becomes eclipsed by Darkness, and Divine Thought, the eternal memory, is lost, and supplanted by ignorance.

Ahura Mazda, the God, the Light, the Divine Spirit (the Light that shineth in Darkness) is ever striving with Angra Mainyu, the Self-Will, the Demon, the Darkness in us. We have to become Soldiers of Light, and fight the good fight on the side of Ahura Mazda, the Divine in us, against Angra Mainyu, the King of Darkness, the Demonic selfish perversions that we have acquired.

The combatants and the battle-field are in us, and the war in which all the powers of the Universe (of the mind) are engaged on one side or the other, and sometimes on both sides, ends with the Beginning of all Things Divine—the death of Angra Mainyu, when

Good triumphs and Evil disappears, becoming transformed into Purity, Truth, and Love. The death of the Demon conditions the birth of the Divine.

Herodotus describes the worship of the Persians in many parts of his history;—he says, "They have no altars, no temples, nor images; they worship on the tops of the mountains. They adore the Heavens, and sacrifice to the Sun, Moon, Fire, and Water." Yes, but in so doing they worship the symbols of their God.

The whole religion of the Avesta revolves around Zoroaster. In the Sacred books he is called "*The Pure*," good in thought, speech, and work, and it is said that "He alone knows the precepts of Ormazd" (Spiegel Gâthâ Ustvaiti XLII. 8). Zoroaster bases his law on the eternal distinction between good and evil, right and wrong; he abhorred wrong-doing, convinced that it had its origin in a Spirit of Evil of awful power, with whom we should constantly do battle; but his weapons were not carnal. "Pure thoughts" expressed in "true words," and shown forth in "right actions," would result in the triumph of goodness. He might have used the words of the Apostle Paul, and said, "We wrestle not with flesh and blood," that is, our struggle is not with man alone, but with principles of evil, rulers of darkness, spirits of wickedness in the super-mundane world. "Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the Word of God (Ephesians vi. 10—17).

Until near the end of the last century there was no certain information concerning Zoroaster and his teachings. We are indebted to the indefatigable perseverance of a young Frenchman, named Anquetil du Perron, born in Paris, in 1731, for the first translation of the *Zend Avesta* into any European language, which was published in French in 1771. When only twenty-four years of age he started alone for India, with his knapsack, a Hebrew Bible, and a case of mathematical instruments. He travelled on foot over a great part of Hindostan, arriving, after many wonderfully romantic adventures, at Surat, in 1759, where by patience and much perseverance he induced the Destours, or Priests of the Parsi Community of Fire Worshippers, to teach him the Zend language, and to furnish him with manuscripts of the Avesta. Of the age of these books, however, and the period when Zoroaster lived nothing is really known, although it has been asserted that he lived in the time of Darius, and gave lessons of philosophy in Babylon to Pythagoras; but, "the language of the Avesta," says Max Müller, "is so much more primitive than the inscriptions of Darius, that many centuries must have passed between the two periods represented by these two stratas of language" (Chips, Vol. I. p. 88). He is mentioned by Plato (Alcibiades I. 37), who speaks of the "Magism (System of the Medes), of Zoroaster, the Ormazdian," which would only carry the epoch of Zoroaster back to the sixth or seventh century before Christ; but Aristotle and Eudoxus, according to Pliny, place him six thousand years before Christ. Spiegel considers Zoroaster as a neighbour and contemporary of Abraham, therefore as living two thousand years, instead of 530 B.C. Freeman Clark says, "It is not likely that Zoroaster ever saw Pythagoras or even Abraham." From an ancient Hindu source we learn that "Zuruaster was the title of the spiritual teachers of Ahura Mazda, a title corrupted later into Guru-Asters. There was a series of fourteen of these Masters, or Gurus, one after the other." Thus no date can be assigned as an epoch. "The Jews, on returning from the Babylonian Captivity, were thoroughly imbued with Zoroastrian and Magian ideas, and their Kabbala, or secret book of Occult Wisdom, was the offspring of the Chaldean Kabbala. The name by which its students were known in the secret lodges of the Jewish Pharisees (or Pharsis) was *Kabirim*—from Kabeiri, the Mystery Gods of Assyria."

Dr. Etheridge, author of many learned works, and amongst others the "HORÆ ARAMAICÆ"; or, Outlines on the Shemitic Languages, in his "Introduction to Hebrew Literature," devotes a chapter to a very interesting inquiry concerning the origin of the Kabbala. After pointing out the striking analogy that exists to Platonism in the notions of *pre-existence*, *reminiscence*, and the *metempsychosis*, he passes in review the Alexandrine School, saying that between the Kabbala and Neo-Platonism there are indeed unquestionable resemblances; but decides that historical considerations render it impossible that the latter should have been the model of the former; adding that we are more justified in supposing that the Neo-Platonists copied from the Kabbalists than the contrary. He then negatives the idea that it could have had its origin in the writings of Philo—the Jewish philosopher of Alexandria—who seems to have been unknown to the Jews of the Middle Ages, and almost equally so to their rabbinical ancestors in Palestine and Babylon. After devoting some pages to Philo, and finally dismissing him, without, however, adverting to his frequent allusion to the mysterious "*Brethren*" (which, had he remarked it, might very likely have helped him to find the true solution he is seeking), he passes on to say:

> "Some writers have thought they have perceived such an affinity between the doctrines and phraseology of Christianity and the Kabala as to warrant the notion that the latter had its origin in the former."

And in discussing this possibility he points out many analogies between the Kabbala and the leading opinions of the Gnostics, particularly those to be found in the "Codex Nazaræus," which has been well called the Bible of Gnosticism. "And here," he says, "the similarity of the two systems comes out in full light, particularly when reading the fragments of the teachings of the Gnostics, which occur in the writings of the early Fathers, especially Irenæus, it would be possible to make out the leading points of the Kabbala itself: *the degredation of natures at each degree of remoteness from the Divine fountain; the production of actual things by the Logos; the four worlds; the male and female Soul, and their union;* and even the symbolism of the *numbers and letters of the Alphabet,* all which leave no doubt there was some intimate relation between the two theories." All this again induces us to express a regret that he did not pay more particular attention to the frequent mention by Philo of the mysterious "Brethren," to whom we will call more particular attention in our section on "The Theosophic Interpretation of the Bible."

"What then?" exclaims Etheridge (in his "Introduction to Hebrew Literature," p. 339). "Did the Kabalists borrow of the Gnostics? The truth is the exact reverse. But from whom did the Kabalists borrow? Whence came those metaphysical dogmas which were neither derived from the Greek philosophy, either of the heathen or the Judæo-Alexandrian schools, nor yet were indigenous to Palestine, because transplanted thither?

"To find the true answer, we must take a new standpoint, and revisit Babylonia. In that 'land of the children of the East, those very doctrines, at the time of the Hebrew captivity, were taking their full development in the teachings of Zeraduscht, or Zoroaster, of which we have a valid representation in the *Zend Avesta.* This ancient record was first brought to Europe by M. Anquetil du Perron in the last century, when its authenticity was subjected to a vigorous investigation. At length the personal researches and vast erudition of the Danish philologist, M. Rask, dispelled the last doubts of the most sceptical, and imprinted the work with the true seal of antiquity. The original is written in Zend, a language which bears a strong affinity to the Sanskrit. According to Sir William Jones, in ten Sanscrit words seven are Zend." . . . .

"Zoroaster flourished at the very time of the Jews' captivity in Babylonia, which terminated in the first year of Cyrus, B.C. 530; at which time, then about forty years of age, Zoroaster had for fourteen years been extensively engaged in effecting those reforms in the old Persian religion with which his name was thenceforth to be identified."* . . . "But the influence of the Zoroastrian doctrines was yet more remarkably unfolded in the metaphysical system which had such a charm for the learned Hebrews who had found in the Persian dominions their abiding home. In the Rabbinical Schools in Babylonia, an esoteric teaching accompanied, in the case of a select few, the traditional law doctrines which finally embodied itself in the Talmud." . . . "Now in the *Zend Avesta* may be found all the great primordial principles of the Kabalistic theory. Observe, we do not speak of the ramified practice of the Kabala, but of the principles of its theory. Thus, the *En Soph* of the Kabala answers to the *Zervanne Akerene*, 'the Eternally Boundless One,' of the *Zend Avesta*. The Magians apply the epithet of *Zervanne Akerene* to illimitable space as well as duration; and one of the names given by the Kabalists to the Deity is that of *Makom*, 'Place,' in the same way. The *Logos* or *Memra*, as the Targumists always designate him, is the *Honofer* or *Ormuzd* of the *Zend Avesta*, which calls him also expressly 'the Son,' and affirms that it was by him the *Zervanne* produced the world. The *Honofer* is the Mediator between the boundless incomprehensible *Zervanne* and finite being, and himself becomes more intelligible and more clearly revealed in the character of Ormuzd, who has sometimes manifested himself in a human form in a body resplendent as the Light, at once Spirit and Word; and in him, rather than in the *Zervanne*, the attributes which constitute absolute perfection become knowable by the mind of man. His throne is light (compare the *Merkava*), and like 'the heavenly man' of the Kabala, he unites in himself the true 'wisdom,' the highest 'understanding, greatness, grace, beauty, power, and glory,' and is the fashioner and sustainer of all beings. What have we here but the *sefiroth* of the Kabala?

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* Can Dr. Etheridge have read the opinions of the other historians we have quoted concerning the age of Zoroaster when he makes this decided statement?

"As in the Platonic so also in the Kabalistic system, all finite being proceeds from a Divine idea. But this is also the doctrine of the Zend books, which give to this archetypal idea the name of *Feruer* or *Feroher*, the Divine prototypal conception of all things, whether collectively or individually considered. In looking, too, at the account which Du Perron has given of the psychology of the Parsees (*Mém, de l'Academie des Inscriptions, tome xxxvii.*), it will be seen that it answers to the distribution of the elements in the human being adopted by the Kabalists. In like manner the angels of the latter are represented in the *Dewés* of the Persians; and finally, even the *Ahréman*, the evil being of the *Zend*, has his reflection in the *Samael* of the Kabala, the personified principle of darkness and evil.

"Thus far, I think, it appears plainly that the Kabala is not a mere shadow of the Platonic philosophy, either old or new—not a fabrication of Philo, nor an imitation of Christianity, *but that its material was deduced out of the theosophic dogmas of Zoroaster*, not, indeed as a servile copy, but as a modification, adapted, so far as the Jews could make it, to the theology of Moses and the prophets.

"The question now is, were these wondrous ideas the creations of Zoroaster's own fancy, or had he derived them from another source? A little further investigation will lead us to conclude that the truth lies on the side of the latter alternative, and that, at least, the primary principles of his creed had existed in more remote times, and were adopted and modified by the Persian hierophant in the construction of the theosophic system which has come down to us with the imprint of his name. To see this we must do in imagination what he did in reality,—look still towards the East, and visit the lands beyond the Indus. We there find a people who, at that time, had reached a height of civilization which had not been surpassed by any of the nations of antiquity." . . . . "Waving all consideration of topics extraneous to the question before us, it will be enough that we restrict ourselves here to the sacred literature of the Indians as an accessible and undoubted means of ascertaining their *credenda* on those points of Theosophy which bear upon the matter we have in hand." . . . "This is now sufficiently unfolded to be within the reach of ordinary students in excellent translations, in English, French, and German." . . . "The original language in which they are embodied is the Sanscrit, one of the most ancient tongues of the earth, if not the primeval one, and which, even in the times of the authors of these books, was taught in perfect grammatical forms, and had attained a grandeur and refinement but rarely surpassed. It was then, and still is, the language of religion and science among the Hindoos." . . .

After naming the Vedas, the Upavedas, and a host of the celebrated symbolical Books of the old Indian religion, Dr. Etheridge goes on to observe (page 347):

"Now, without saying that all the details of the Kabalistic theory are found in these antique writings, we may safely affirm that the radical principles of it are there existent in their strongest germs. The Theosophy of the Indians may be technically ranged under three heads: the *Nyaya*, *Mimansa*, and *Vedanta*. The first investigates the phenomena of *mind*. It has to do with the abstract metaphysics of logic, and leads to a theory of pure idealism,—the identity of being and thought. The second, of which the principal sect or school is the Sankhya, recognizes two Divine substances, or rather, the one Divine substance in two states; the one Purush, eternally quiescent; and the other Prakriti, from which has emanated the entire system of nature. The third School, the *Vedanta*, opening the true, ultimate, and pantheistic aim or end of the *Vedas*, regards the Divine nature as existing in two conditions: first, abstract essence, quiescent in itself, and incomprehensible by us; secondly, a being coming forth in a Divine activity, and producing the Universe. It will be perceived that in these theosophies, mixed up, indeed, with a multitude of mythologic and extraneous elements, may be found the root principles of the Kabalistic doctrine.

"1. The recognition of a self-existent and eternal nature, undefinable and inconceivable; to which they give the neuter appellation of *Brahm;* the *Zervan Akerene* of Zoraduscht, and the *Ensoph* of the Kabala.

"2. A filial emanation of this infinite nature, who is as a first-born son of the *Brahm*, and who bears the name of *Brahma*. 'From that which is,' says Menu, 'without beginning or end, was produced the Divine man, famed in all worlds under the appellation of Brahma.' This personification is equivalent to the Kabalistic *Memra*, the *Adam Kadmon*, or heavenly Man. It may be observed also, that Brahma is often represented with a human form.

"3. The natural universe is produced by Brahma. From him proceeded 'the heavens above and the earth beneath. In the midst he placed the subtle ether, the eight regions, and the primeval receptacle of waters.' (MENU.)

"4. Yet the natural Universe is considered to have been self-emanative; a pantheistic dogma which has its counterpart in the procession or development of the *Sefiroth* worlds from the First-begotten Son, who is at once the archetype and principle of all finite being, and nevertheless in his own substance Divine.

"5. A trinal distinction in the Divinity, unfolded in the results of production, preservation, and renovation. This *trimurti*, or Divine triad, consists of (1.) *Brahma* so called from a root which signifies 'to unfold or expand.' (2.) *Vishnou*, from *vis* 'to penetrate or pervade,' as with sustaining energy. (3.) *Siva*, or *Iswara*, signifying 'powerful.' He who bears this latter name is known as the power which will destroy, but will destroy only that he may renovate. *Siva* is called also *Mahadeva*. These names of the three persons are abbreviated in the symbolic books by the letters A. U. M., or more commonly by the word O'M, a word which the Hindu is as reluctant to pronounce audibly, as the Hebrew is to utter the Name of four letters.

"6. The existence of an evil principle, occupied in counteracting the benevolent purposes of the good one, in their execution by the *Dewata*, or subordinate Genii, to whom is entrusted the control over the various evolutions of nature.

"7. Metempsychosis. The Soul, an offset from the Deity, an emanation from the Light of Lights, is destined ultimately to return to its great original. Subjected to the depraving effects of evil in time, it is to work out a purifying probation; and if it fail in this in one era of probation, another and yet another is granted till the work shall be complete. The new probation may be achieved in another human body, in which case the Soul is so far regenerated, *i.e.*, literally born again; or the probation may have to be worked out in the body of a beast. This doctrine becomes with the Indians a ruling principle of existence, the basis of their life.*

"8. The entire world an emanation from the Deity, and therefore of one substance. One only has existed from eternity. Everything we behold, and ourselves too, are portions of Him. The soul, mind, and intellect of men, and all sentient creatures, are offshoots from the universal soul, to which it is their fate to return. 'But the mind of finite beings is impressed with a series of illusions which it considers as real, till re-united with the great fountain of truth.' Of these illusions, the most potent is that termed *Ahangcar*, or 'the feeling of individuality.' By its influence the soul, when detached from its source, becomes ignorant of its own nature, origin, and destiny, and erroneously considers itself as a separate existence, and no longer a spark of the eternal fire, a part of the universal whole, or a link in one unbroken and immeasurable chain.

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* "See on this point the fourth of the 'Lectures on History,' by that learned, wise, and good man, FREDERIC VON SCHLEGEL."

"9. The universe being of one substance, and an emantion from God, it follows that there is no such thing as Matter in the gross and vulgar sense of the word. According to the Indian Sophists, matter has no essence independent of mental perception; existence and perceptibility are convertible terms; external appearances and the whole outward world are illusory; and what we take to be the attributes of matter are, in effect, so many manifestations of spirit. The substance we call 'matter' is, and yet is not, eternal: the first, when considered in relation to its Divine original; and the second, with regard to its figured states or phenomenal developments."

"Such are the fundamental principles of the Indian philosophy, delivered, with more or less clearness, in the books to which we have referred. The various Schools of the old Brahmanic faith do not agree in all things, and have, on some points, wide divergencies, making use even of different names for the same things in which they do agree; but, with all these variations, they substantially coalesce in the recognition of the doctrine here set down. Now, the oneness of these principles with those which form the groundwork of the Kabala is too plain to be denied; and as it is highly probable that the Jews obtained their Kabalistic ideas from the School of Zoroaster, so is the probability equally great that he obtained them from the Indians.

"Though thus far, both as to time and region, we have traced the genesis of the Kabala, we are aware that the ultimate answer is not achieved. For still the question recurs, From whom did the Indians derive it? So remote, however, is the antiquity which enshrouds the *origines* of that people, that it must be confessed that no reply can be given to such a question but what is conjectural. But they who are inclined to the investigation of it would find it reasonable to consider whether, first, this whole pantheistic doctrine, which so early took hold of the human intellect, and still sways it so widely,* may not have been a perversion of primævally revealed truth; and whether the revelations made to the patriarchs of our race were not more ample and rich than we commonly suppose; whether they had not some knowledge of the trinal Mystery of the Elohim, the Mediation of the second principle of the Trinity in creation and redemption, the existence of Angels and of the Satanic foe, a future and immortal life, and the ultimate felicity of the sanctified in the eternal fruition of God; but that their descendants were faithless to these divinely spoken truths, and sank into the abyss of heathenish error. Compare here St. Paul's assertion (Rom. i. 21)."

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* As witness the Indian Brahmaism, the Zoroastrian Magianism, the Jewish Kabbalism, the Alexandrian Neo-Platonism, the Scholastic Mysticism of the Middle Ages, and the Pantheistic Philosophy of our own time, which are all the same in principle.

The extremely practical and utilitarian direction that religious ideas take among the Persians is at times remarkably curious. Not only are there many ceremonies that are simply hygienic rules which, although defective, have been copied by the Jews in their religious ceremonial, but we read even of Seers being entrusted with the solution of problems in Spiritual Science, upon which they had to report.

In the first three chapters of the Book of Arda Viraf it is related how, when in the sixth century of the Christian Era, many new sects and religions arising, the followers of Zoroaster began to entertain doubts about the truth of their ancient faith, especially as regards rewards and punishments in another life, that in order to solve these doubts finally and satisfactorily, a great council of forty thousand Magi was convened, and from it Arda Viraf, as the wisest and most virtuous, was elected to undertake personally, and while yet in the body, a clairvoyant expedition through Heaven and Hell. Arda Viraf accepted the task and executed it in seven days; whereupon he returned to life, and dictated his report to a scribe. This report, which in some parts anticipates Dante's *Divina Comedia*, forms the contents of the Book of Arda Viraf. *

Arda Viraf, the purest of the Magian priests, describes "the pitiable state to which the Soul of a covetous money-hoarder is reduced after death!" The poor wretch, penniless—since he could take not a *direin* with him—his heart buried with his savagely-loved treasures, his once pure nature corrupted and deformed, moved the Seer to profoundest pity.

> "I saw it," says he, "creep along in fear and trembling, and presently a wind came sweeping along, loaded with the most pestilential vapours, even as it were from the boundaries of hell. . . . In the midst of this wind appeared a form of the most demoniacal appearance. . . . The terrified soul attempts to escape, but in vain; the awful, vengeful shape by voice and power roots him to the spot. He inquires in trembling accents whom he may be, and is answered, 'I am your genius [that is, his spiritual counterpart and now his mastering destiny], and have become thus deformed by your crimes. Whilst you were innocent I was handsome. . . . You have laid in no provisions for this long journey; you were rich, but you did no good with your riches, . . . and not only did no good yourself but prevented, by your evil example, those whose inclinations led them to do good; and you have often mentally said, "When is the day of judgment. To me it will never come!"'" ("*Ardai Viraf Nameh*," by Captain J. A. Pope, p. 56.)

The Holy Fire with which the Persian Priest of old filled the Censer from the Sacred Altar was, as an act, symbolical of imparting to the worshippers the knowledge of Divine Truth; and in the *Gita*, Krishna informs Arjun that God is in the fire of the altar. "I am the fire; I am the victim."

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* See "The Book of Arda Viraf." The Pahlavi Text prepared by Dastur Hoshangji Jamaspji Asa, with an English Translation by M. Haug, assisted by E. W. West. Bombay and London. 1872.

That Holy Fire is ever burning on the sacred altars of Persia; it is never rekindled, for never is it permitted to die out. It is indeed no common fire to be rekindled at pleasure, but would require the flames of a thousand different fires to be collected from every imaginable source, to gather only the quintessence, as it were, of their separate flames—and why so?

"Because," as we read in "*The Spirit of the Zoroastrian Religion*," "this spiritual element of Fire pervades all nature, is its life and soul, is the cause of the motion of its molecules, which produces the phenomenon of physical heat. And the fires from all these thousand hearths are collected, like so many fragments of the universal life, into one sacrificial blaze which shall be as perfectly as possible the complete and collective type of the light of Ormazd. See, the priest takes not the crude coals from the various hearths, and furnaces, and pits; but at each flame he lights a bit of sulphur, a ball of cotton, or some other inflammable substance; from this secondary blaze he ignites a second quantity of fuel; from this a third, from the third a fourth, and so on; taking in some cases a ninth, in others a twentieth flame, until the first grossness of the defilement of the fire in the base use to which it was put has been purged, and only the purest essence remains. Then only is it fit to be placed upon the altar of Ormazd; and even then the flame is not ready to be the type of that eternal brightness: it is as yet but a body of earthly flame, a body which lacks its noblest soul. . . . Upon a stone block the dried sandlewood is laid. Four priests stand at the four cardinal points. The Gathas are intoned, the priests bow their faces in reverential awe; the Dastur raises his eyes to heaven, he recites the mystical words of power: lo! the fire from the upper world of space descends, and with its silvery tongues laps round the fragrant wood, which bursts into a blaze. This is the missing spirit evoked by the adept Prometheus. When this is added to the thousand other dancing flames, the symbol is perfected, and the face of Ormazd shines before his worshippers. Lighted thus at Sanjáu, that historic fire has been kept alive for more than seven hundred years, and until another Darah appears among you to draw the flames of the ambient ether upon your altar, let it be fed continuously. . . . This ancient art of drawing fire from heaven was taught in the Samothracian and Kabiric mysteries. Numa, who introduced the vestal mysteries into Rome, thus kindled a fire which was under the care of consecrated Vestal Virgins, whose duty it was, under penalty of death for neglect, to constantly maintain it. It was, as Schweigger shows, the Hermes fire, the Elmes fire of the ancient Germans; the lightning of Cybele; the torch of Apollo; the fire of Pan's altar; the fire-flame of Pluto's helm; the inextinguishable fire in the temple of the Grecian Athênê on the Acropolis of Athens; and the mystical fires of many different worships and symbols. This occult science was shared by the initiates of the Sacred Science all over the ancient world. The knowledge was first gained in Chaldea, and was thence spread through Greece to more Western and Northern countries."—(From H. Olcott's "Address to the Parsis.")

The Parsis face the fire as they do the sun and the sea, picturing in them to themselves the Hidden Light of Lights, Source of all Life, to which they give the name of Ormazd. This is beautifully expressed in the writings of Robert Fludd, the English mystic of the 17th century. (See Hargreave Jennings, *The Rosicrucians*, p. 69, *et seq.*)

"Regard Fire, then, with other eyes than with those soulless, incurious ones with which thou hast looked upon it as the most ordinary thing. Thou hast forgotten what it is—or rather thou hast never known. Chemists are silent about it, or speak fearfully of it in whispers. . . Philosophers talk of it as anatomists discourse of the human body, saying: It is made for man and this world, and it is greatly like him—that is, *mean*, they would add, and they do think it, if they dare add their thinkings. But is this all? Is this the sum of that casketed lamp of the human body, thine own body, thou unthinking world's machine—thou man? Or, in the fabric of this clay lamp" [what a beautiful simile!] "burneth there not a light? Describe that, ye doctors of physics! . . . Touch at its heart, ye dissectors of fibres and of valves, of sinews and muscles . . as with steel tools ye gather round this 'Tree' (human though it be) to wind into the innermost secret of it. Cyclops—one-eyed and savage—break into meaning this portent Man on your science wheels! Note the goings of the Fire. . . Think that this thing is bound up in matter chains. Think that He is outside of all things, and deep in the inside of all things; and that thou and thy world are only the *thing between;* and that outside and inside are both identical, couldst thou understand the supernatural truths! Reverence Fire (for its meaning), and tremble at it; though in the earth it be chained, and the foot of the archangel Michael—like upon the Dragon—be upon it! Avert the face from it, as the Magi turned, dreading, and (as the symbol) before it bowed askance. So much for this great thing Fire. . . . Observe the multiform shapes of Fire—the spires, the cascades, and the mighty falls of it, where the roar, as it grows high in imperial masterdom, is as that of Niagara. Think what it can do, what it is. Watch the trail of sparks struck, as in that spouting arch from the metal shoes of the trampling horse. It is as a letter of the great alphabet. The familiar London streets, even, can give thee the Persian's God: though in thy pleasures, and in thy commerce operations, thou so often forgettest thine own God.

"Wonder no longer then, if the ancient Persians and their masters the Magi—concluding that they saw 'all' in this supernaturally magnificent element—fell down and worshipped it, making of it the visible representation of the very truest, but yet in man's speculation, and in his philosophies—nay, in his commonest reason—impossible God: God being everywhere, and in us, and indeed us, in the God-lighted man; and impossible to be contemplated or known outside—being All!"

No religion has profounder or deeper spiritual truths than the Parsi. Abul Pharaj, in the "Book of Dynasties" (p. 54), states that "Zarathusht taught the Persians the manifestation of *Wisdom* (the Lord's anointed Son, or Logos, the Persian "Honover"). This is the living manifested Word of Deific Wisdom. He also predicted that "a Virgin would conceive immaculately, and that at the birth of that future messenger a six-pointed star would appear, and shine at noonday. In its centre would appear the figure of a Virgin." Accordingly we read in the Gospels of the visit of the Magi, or wise men of the East, who followed the star they had seen, and which led them to where the young Child lay in a manger. This six-pointed star is the dual emblem of the Macrocosm and Microcosm, the symbolical one of the Kabbala, and is represented on the cover of this Book. The Logos or Saviour, to be born, means the secret knowledge or science which reveals the "Wisdom of God."

We read that Zarathusht was one of the first reformers who taught to the people a portion of that which he had learned at his initiation, viz., the six periods or *Gâhambârs* in the successive evolution of the world. The first is *Midyuzeram*, that in which the heavenly canopy was formed; the second, *Mid-yirshân*, in which the collected moisture formed the steamy clouds from which the waters were finally precipitated; the third, *Piti-shahim*, when the earth becomes consolidated out of primeval cosmic atoms; the fourth, *Iyaseram*, in which earth gave birth to vegetation; the fifth, *Midiyarim*, when the latter slowly evoluted into animal life; the sixth, *Ham-espita-midam*, when the lower animals culminated in man; the seventh period—to come at the end of a certain cycle—is prefigured by the promised coming of the Persian Messiah, seated on a horse; when the sun of our Solar System will be extinguished and the Pralaya will begin. In the Christian *Apocalypse* of St. John, the Persian symbolical prophecy is almost repeated, and the Aryan Hindu also awaits the coming of his Kalanki Avatar, when the Celestial White Horse will come in the Heavens with Vishnu, his glorious Rider. Thus we see the horses of the Sun figure in all religions.

According to the secret doctrine of "The Law of *Correspondences*," the horse signifies the understanding of the Word of God, and a *white* horse the understanding of the Word with respect to Truth and Good. To *ride* signifies to instruct, and to disseminate instruction. Thus all Religions point to a coming time when the understanding of man shall be opened to receive and comprehend Divine Truths which will then be forthcoming. Nay, do we not already see the horses of the chariot of the Sun, and the Aurora, or bright dawn of the NEW DAY, swiftly approaching? Does not all that is passing around us in the present, seem to point to the fact that this time has arrived? The Time for making known: "When men shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased." We see the Esoteric Truths, "*kept secret from the beginning*," are now openly published, and can be studied by those who show they are ready to receive them by their eager inquiry after them.

And is not this the real meaning of the descent of

Divine Wisdom described in the twelfth chapter of the Apocalypse, immediately after the Rider on the White Horse, as "The Bride from Heaven," "The Woman clothed with the Sun," therefore robed in heavenly Light; "great with child," *i.e.*, pregnant with "Divine Truth" or the Knowledge of God, thus containing in herself all that God sends in the New Dispensation to enlighten and regenerate His people?

Great events on the outer and material plane ever accompany those which occur on the interior and spiritual, no doubt as a natural consequence, causes ever working outwards into material effects, and USES; and thus has it been with the advent of the New Dispensation, which many believe to have commenced in 1882,* and which truly may be called that of "OUR LADY OF LIGHT," for, besides all the spiritual signs accompanying its dawn, so clearly seen by the watchers on the topmost towers and on the high hills, it was ushered in on the material plane with great International Exhibitions, or "World-Shows" of Electric Light, in London, Paris, and Vienna, announced to the four quarters of the earth by Electric wires and Telephones.

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* The year 1881 was shown to be the last of the Old Dispensation by many prophecies fulfilled at that time, and particularly by the testimony of the Great Pyramid, that "Pillar of witness to the Lord on the borders of the Land of Egypt" (Isaiah xix. 19), whose grand gallery (followed by the extremely difficult, low and narrow entrance passage into the KING'S CHAMBER!) terminates exactly at the number 1881-2. The fractional 2 is supposed to indicate the first two months of the following year. This very narrow and difficult passage is said to point to a short time of great trouble on earth previous to entering on a very happy one.

THEOSOPHY OF THE DRUIDS.

A system nearer home, in many respects similar to that of the Magi, and evidently also of Oriental origin, is the Theosophy of the Druids, which, however, has survived only in a few literary remains.

We are taught that the Druidical institution of Britain was Pythagorean or Brahminical. It is beyond a doubt that the Druids were of the Oriental family, but at what date they established themselves in the "lonely isles amid the ocean" no historian can record. They brought with them the Oriental doctrine of re-incarnation or a plurality of lives, still firmly held in many parts of France, particularly in Brittany, which is thickly studded with very grand and interesting remains of Druidical worship. Indeed, we can judge of the ancient Druids simply by the solemn and stately traces left standing of them, surviving in their majestic and lonely grandeur through the ages of civilization. Among the most remarkable are the "bowing stones" in Wales, which were evidently oracular, and bowed or trembled in response, when sought for divine purposes, like the tables of modern (so-called) Spiritualists; the wierd and stately remains in the Islands of Orkney, and those frowning monuments still standing in solemn grandeur on the plains of Salisbury.

While gazing in silent awe and wonder on these mysterious records of the worship of the ancient Druids, as a remnant of the long ago and past away ages, very few have any idea that this worship is still lasting on, and that, in France particularly, they may be gazing upon them in company with Druids of the present; but such is undoubtedly the case, and not only in Brittany where the Druids were so powerful, but also in other provinces of France, and in some parts of Wales, they still celebrate their rites, and continue their ancient worship, not openly of course, but in the solemn silence of the night; and shrouded by the friendly shelter and companionship of the old trees in the dark woods, do they still hold their mystic meetings.

We learn from an inhabitant of Charolles, a lady of great personal integrity and high mental culture, that in the Bourgogne department of Saone et Loire there still exist some adepts of the Druidical faith, which as a fervent Catholic she sadly deplores; although she says that they lead exemplary lives, and carefully conceal their rites from those they look upon as profane, making no propaganda, but contenting themselves with transmitting their ancient faith from father to son. All that can be discovered of them is that they assemble together in the depths of the forests to perform their religious rites on certain nights in the year, generally at the full of the moon, choosing always the highest ground. They are then robed in white, and crowned with leaves, which they gather with the mistletoe from the old oak trees. In a standing posture, and with their hands and eyes lifted solemnly to heaven, they give themselves up to prayer. They rarely meet twice running at the same spot, thus endeavouring to avoid discovery. They are called "Les Adeptes de la Religion Blanche," probably on account of their long white robes. Those who belong to this faith never assist at the ceremonies of the Catholic Church, and it is through their absence, and at the same time through their profound respect for all religious beliefs, which distinguishes them from freethinkers, that they are at last discovered. They are generally from the peasant class, though there are exceptions. What is known of their midnight meetings and of their mysterious rites is through the observations of poachers, and of other solitary wanderers who have come upon them by accident in the midst of their solemn assemblies, and observed them from some concealment; these, however, confess to a superstitious fear which they say overcomes them, and which generally obliges them to hasten away with stealthy tread rather than stay to watch their proceedings; "*Les Hommes de la Religion Blanche*" being looked upon as sorcerers, although they are ever the most quiet and honest of men. So strong is their belief in the re-incarnation of the Soul that they will lend money to be repaid with moderate interest on their resurrection. Like their ancestors, they are physicians or medicine men, and also astronomers.

Before the establishment of Christianity, the civilised Celtic nations had their Theosophy, of which the Druids were the depositaries. They forbade any communication of their mysteries by writing, and it was only when the Druids were virtually extinct, as a Hierarchy, that Initiates of that order dared to transgress their commandments, and commit their knowledge to writing.

But while the Druids were Druids, the Bards were compelled to entrust their knowledge to memory, which, by constant use, they cultivated to a marvellous degree, and the faculty of memory and music seems to have transmitted itself hereditarily to their present descendants—the Welsh.

For mnemonic convenience, as also for Theosophic reasons, the Bards preferred to preserve their highest truths in Triads, of which we give a few quotations.

TRIADS.

"1. There are three primeval Unities, and more than one of each cannot exist: one God; one truth; and one point of liberty, and this is where all opposites equiponderate.

"2. Three things proceed from the three primeval Unities: all life; all goodness; all power.

"3. God consists necessarily of three things: the greatest in respect of life; the greatest in respect of knowledge; and the greatest in respect of power; and there can only be one of what is greatest in anything.

"4. Three things it is impossible God should not be: whatever perfect goodness ought to be; whatever perfect goodness would desire to be; and whatever perfect goodness can be.

"5. The three witnesses of God in respect of what He has done, and will do: infinite power; infinite knowledge; and infinite love; for there is nothing that these cannot perform, do not know, and will not bring to pass.

"6. The three ultimate ends of God's regulation in giving existence to everything: to weaken the evil; to strengthen the good; and to manifest all discrimination, that what ought to be might be known from what ought not to be.

"7. Three things which God cannot but perform: what is most useful; what is most necessary; and what is most beautiful of all things.

"8. The three stabilities of existence: what cannot be otherwise; what need not be otherwise; and what cannot be conceived better; and in these will all things end.

"9. Three things will necessarily exist: the supreme power; the supreme intelligence; and the supreme love of God.

"10. The three characteristics of God: complete life; complete knowledge; and complete power.

"11. The three causes of living beings: the love of God in accord with the most perfect intelligence; the understanding of God knowing all possible means; and the power of God in accord with supreme will, love, and intelligence.

"12. There are three Circles of existence: the circle of Ceugant, where there is nothing but God, of either living or dead, and none but God can traverse it; the Circle of Abred, where all things are by nature derived from death, and man has traversed it; and the Circle of Gwynvyd, where all things spring from life, and man shall traverse it in heaven.

"13. The three states of existence of living beings: the state of Abred in Annwn; the state of liberty in humanity; and the state of love, that is, Gwynvyd in heaven.

"14. The three necessities of all animated existences: a beginning in Annwn*; progression in Abred; and plenitude in heaven, that is, the circle of Gwynvyd: without these three things nothing can exist but God. etc., etc., etc."

BARDIC APHORISMS.

"Thus says the Bard:—

"There is no advantage but what can in no way be dispensed with, that is, God;

"There is no want but the want of God;
There is no enjoyment but the enjoyment of God;
There is no loss but the loss of God;
There is no sufficiency but God;
There is nothing immeasurable but God;
There is nothing knowing but God;
There is nothing in every place but God;
There is nothing powerful but God;
There is nothing in everything but God;
There is no whole but God;
There is no God but what is whole."

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* The Mystic Hell, which everyone must pass through once before he attains to Nirvana. "Annwn is visited but once."

The following is the Druidic conception of the Circles or Spheres of Existence :—

> "The Circle (or Sphere) of Abred, in which are all corporal and dead existences.
>
> "The Circle (or Sphere) of Gwynvyd, in which are all animated and immortal beings.
>
> "The Circle (or Sphere) of Ceugant, where there is only God."

The Druidic ideas of existence are, in some respects, also extremely similar to those of the Buddhists. If we call Abred in Annwn, Avitchi; Gwynvyd, Devachan; and Ceugant, Nirvana; we have the same ideas only under other names.

Both systems aim at liberation from the circle of inchoation, transmigration, and their consequent enslavements; and although some Buddhists would make out Avitchi to be quite an orthodox Hell, the Evil, mystically pourtrayed by the terms of Abred and Avitchi, is but enslavement to ignorance, and the moment we arrive at the state of liberation we are also freed from the mystic Hell, in which, until that moment we had to abide.

Those who desire to study the Theosophy of the Druids, should commence with "Le Mystère des Bardes, par Adolphe Pictet," and "Barddas" translated by I. Williams ab Ithel.* There are many traits of similarity between the Druid, the Egyptian, Brahmin, and

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* The reader is also referred to Toland's History of the Druids, and to an important book published in London, in 1829, by Sir Godfrey Higgins, "*The Celtic Druids; or, An Attempt to show the Druids were the Priests of Oriental Colonies.*"

Magian systems. These systems are also good illustrations of the national or ethnic conservative Theosophies.

The question naturally occurs to us, that, since there are such points of agreement between the system of the Druids and that system of Buddhism, presumably originating with Siddartha, may we not suppose that a pre-historic Wisdom-Religion, anterior to Siddartha, may have existed still more similar, or possibly identical, with Druid Theosophy ?

When National Theosophies show that such unity of Mystic Doctrines have existed, their derivation from a primitive Universal Theosophy may be reasonably deduced. Everything points to some great system lost, for centuries if not millenniums, and only dimly traceable in Mystic Myths. These Occult Allegories should be considered as the historical or traditional source of succeeding Theosophies. A tradition of an Archaic Wisdom-Religion is possible, but "to know what they knew" requires the life and study of an Adept. Individual aspiration is ever necessary in order to become united with the ubiquitous ever-accessible Divine Thought, which is the Mystic source of Theosophy. Tradition is merely the ground for the Divine seed of Mystic Experience, and individual Gnosis alone is that which reveals the Truth of Truths—the Absolute, to every Living Soul.

CHAPTER VI.

ORIENTAL THEOSOPHY.

PART II.

BUDDHIST THEOSOPHY.

WE will now attempt to carry our enquiries into the Buddhist System of Theosophy

The pre-historic Universal Theosophy has left no other vestiges than colossal stone monuments and Hermetic Myths. If that system was a Wisdom-Religion which inculcated an individual knowledge of God, it apparently taught Theosophy only to Initiates, whom it united into a vast universal Brotherhood, but the masses were probably left to idolatry, as the stone monuments would indicate. It was with this as with every pagan Hierarchy: God for the few and the outward Hieroglyph, the Demon, or "letter that killeth," for the many.

The Hierocracy, as we can trace in all religions of antiquity, especially in the national systems, made of God a Great Arcanum, and of Theosophy a Monopoly. When spiritual chiefs of nations, as for instance, Moses, Manu, Zoroaster, revolted against one Hierarchical system, they ever ended by producing another to favour their own tribe.

The Hierarchies remained practically unshaken, until in the fifth Century anterior to the Christian Era a great influx occurred which inaugurated a new Spiritual Dispensation.

In that Century Pythagoras struck a chord that was subsequently re-echoed by Plato and the Alexandrian Theosophists, and which has ever since reverberated in the Souls of men. In that Century, and nearly contemporaneously, Lao-Tse, Confucius, Zoroaster, Daniel, Ezekiel, Jeremiah, Habbakuk, Anaximander, Heraclitos, Xenophanes, taught their various esoteric doctrines; and it was in that cycle also that the people of India saw a Great Light, and that Light was the Manifestation of the Absolute through Gotama Buddha. The teachers who, contemporaneously with Gotama Buddha, taught their respective Theosophies, were only National Teachers, and never attempted to become Catholic or World-Teachers. It was Gotama who attempted the promulgation of the first Catholic System of Theosophy historically known. A System of mental emancipation, accepting all beings alike, without regard to race or caste, and so totally opposed to the craft of bigoted mystery-mongers, that whoever has once mastered its principles cannot possibly forsake them for those of a more limited and more selfish creed.

It was Buddhism that made the first attempt at a universal promulgation of Theosophy, and we find even now that Buddhism stands foremost numerically if not esoterically among all other Systems.

"As the sun shines for all the world, for the good as well as for the bad, for that which is exalted as for that which is low, for the sweetly odorous as for that which smelleth foully, its rays falling equally and not unequally, thus fell also the rays of his divine intelligence, endowed with the knowledge of omniscience."*

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* *Cf.* Lotos of the Good Law, *Chapter V.*

Even before Christ Jesus came and said: "Come unto me all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest" (Mat. xi. v. 28), there was already a Christ teaching the ultimate Salvation of every human being. His grain fell not on barren ground; a truly Catholic spirit prevailed in Buddhism that Christianity could only continue, but scarcely surpass.

> "The missionary spirit displayed by Buddhism distinguishes it from all other religions which preceded Christianity. The religion of Confucius never attempted to make converts outside of China. Brahmanism never went beyond India. The system of Zoroaster was a Persian religion; that of Egypt was confined to the Valley of the Nile; that of Greece to the Hellenic race. But Buddhism was inflamed with the desire of bringing all mankind to a knowledge of its truths.
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> "Its ardent and successful missionaries converted multitudes in Nepaul, Tibet, Birmah, Ceylon, China, Siam, Japan, and in all these states its monasteries are to-day the chief sources of knowledge and centres of instruction to the people. It is idle to class such a religion as this with the superstitions which debase mankind. Its power lay in the strength of conviction which inspired its teachers; and that, again, must have come from the sight of truth, not the belief in error" (*Ten Great Religions*, p. 153, J. F. Clarke).

The story of the life of Siddartha Sakyamuni, or Gotama the Buddha, as he is commonly called, being now as well known as the accounts given of the life of Jesus, demands no special comment from us.* It is the Theosophy we shall attempt to deal with. A Theosophy that, on account of its totally anti-anthropomorphic conception of the Divine Being, is accused of having no God. In Buddhism God is not a reflection of Man, but God Himself, an Absolute Being not to be described by man in his similitude, but a supreme state of existence only to be known by experience. External to that One Thing which is no Thing, everything is Nothing. That which materially appears most real is spiritually the most unreal, and *vice versâ*. There is such an utter dissimilarity between things material or sensual, and things Divine, that we can never give a full and complete description of that which is inconceivable until it is *known*.

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* We desire, however, to offer the tribute of our sincere admiration of the Life of Buddha as given in that exquisite poem, "The Light of Asia," by Mr. Edwin Arnold.

By thinking, studying, and brooding over the Chaos of one's own mind, by striving for Truth and Spiritual Knowledge, by living rightly and in peace, one can become an Initiate and gradually arrive at a true conception of existence. But the mere reader, who hurries through these pages to turn to a novel for amusement, may at once renounce further inquiry, as the subject demands earnest thought and not merely superficial perusal.

But to return to Buddhism. As the present is the result of the past, and the future will be the result of the present, all things are the result of *Karma*, or our own doing, for Karma is the law of consequences.*

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* One of the principal metaphysical doctrines of Buddhism is that which is called Karma. This means the law of consequences. by which every act committed in one life entails results in another. This law operates until one reaches Nirvana. Karma is the law of consequences, by which every act receives its exact recompense in the next life, when the Soul is born again. But unless the same Soul passes on, through a succession of earth lives, such a recompense is impossible, and neither could it expiate or make amends for the injuries it may have done to others unless again

The reign of Law being supreme, we can only emancipate ourselves by living, not merely in strict accordance with, but above the Law, as becomes those who are truly at one with the Law-Giver.

From the hour of our physical birth we have sedulously developed many Soul-obliterating depravities, to which we cling with all the tenacious desires of ignorance. Things of Time have only their temporal uses, yet we cleave to them with such blind attachment that we are deprived of the things of Eternity. There is but one "Thing" in Eternity for us, and that is the "One," the Divinity or the God that is within us, wherein we live and have our Being. That "One" being fully expressed and manifested, unites us with the Eternal, for It only is the Eternal. To attain to

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brought into contact with them. In the words of Jesus: "Verily I say unto thee, thou shalt by no means come out thence (*of prison*) till thou hast paid the uttermost farthing." And again, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until *seventy times seven*," shalt thou forgive thy brother.

"*Karma*," says Buddha, "is the most essential property of all beings; it is inherited from previous births; it is the cause of all good and evil, and the reason why some are mean and some exalted when they come into the world. It is like the shadow which always accompanies the body." Buddha himself obtained all his elevation by means of the Karma acquired in previous states (*Ten Great Religions*). How careful then should we be of our every thought, word, and action, when we consider that each, even the most seemingly insignificant, is helping to build the Karma which is to accompany our Soul for ever as its shadow, either for good or ill, and that every wrong thought, word, and action must inevitably entail upon us its consequences, namely, its expiation, but too often through the most terrible sufferings and afflictions, which are the result of our KARMA, or otherwise would not be entailed upon us by a Just and All-Merciful Providence.

this aim and end the temporal and lower Self has to be annihilated.

If this were mere metaphysical verbiage, it would not have endured. It is an Absolute Experience which any one truly electing himself will pass through without the possibility of failure.

> "He whose senses have become tranquil, like a horse well broken-in by the driver; who is free from pride and the lust of the flesh, and the lust of existence, and the defilement of ignorance, him even the gods envy. Such a one, whose conduct is right, remains like the broad earth, unvexed; like the pillar of the city gate, unmoved; like a pellucid lake, unruffled. For such are no more births. Tranquil is the mind, tranquil the words and deeds of him who is thus tranquilised and made free by wisdom."—*Dhammapadda.*

Buddha taught nothing new; he only brought the neglected ancient Truth into simple form, and that, together with the example of a truly Divine Spirit of total unselfishness, served to inaugurate a far more thorough effort towards an individual and social regeneration, and spiritual emancipation of humanity, from the debasing slavery of ignorance and sensualism, than had ever been previously attempted.

In Buddhism we have one of the most profound Systems of Theosophy. It is the Christianity of the East, and, as such, even in better conservation than is Christianity, the Buddhism of the West.

Those who slight the teachings of Christ may yet learn to value them by comparison with those of Buddha, and those Christians who slight the teachings of Buddha may learn to value them by comparing them with those of Christ.

Practical Buddhism may be thus summarised—It is: *to see, feel, speak, behave, live, act, think, and aspire* RIGHTLY. This is the absolute direction to attain to the Absolute.

We find the same rule poetically rendered in an ancient Hindu Drama as follows* :—

"Be virtue, friends, your only store,
And restless appetite restrain;
Beat meditation's drum, and sore
Your watch against each sense maintain,
The thief that still in ambush lies,
To make devotion's wealth his prize.

"Cast the five senses all away
That triumph o'er the virtuous will;
The pride of self-importance slay,
And ignorance remorseless kill.
So shall you safe the body guard,
And heaven shall be your last reward.

"Why shave the head, and mow the chin,
Whilst bristling follies choke the breast?
Apply the knife to parts within,
And heed not how deformed the rest.
The heart of pride and passion weed,
And then the man is pure indeed."

It is self-evident that Christ and Buddha are but manifestations of the same Divine Principle. The Christ of India prepared the way for the Buddha of Judea. The difference in their systems is purely exoteric. Buddha may have contemplated the *state* of Nirvana, while Christ spoke of Heaven as a radiant and Eternal Principle; but both ideals are identical.

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* "The Toy Cart." H. H. Wilson's translation.

Buddhism is the holiest and most Christ-like Philosophy. Alone, its hands are bloodless, and absolutely innocent of crime; alone, it preaches charity to beast as well as to man, and inculcates a tender feeling for every living thing. Indeed, it teaches but one uncompromising feeling—Love, unbounded Love, and Justice for all. Even as Christ teaches us to love our enemies, and to do good to those who despitefully use us, so does Buddha teach us that the Path to Divine Union is by that Supreme Principle—Divine Love, which alone unites the human with the Divine.

Buddhism neither exacts blind faith nor reverence, except for Truth and Justice. Of all the World-Reformers, Buddha, the Prince-Mendicant, alone, never admitted the possibility, much less the necessity, of drawing the sword to enforce Divine Principles.

And in what relation, it may be asked, does Brahminism stand to Buddhism, and how do the two Systems agree with one another?

Brahminism is the nucleus of Hindu life. The course of life of an Arya is briefly summarized in the following:

> "Purified by various ceremonies from the stains of birth, the Arya, invested with the consecrated cord* and girdle, enters as a disciple of the Brâhmans on the first stage of his training, and after completing his course, he celebrates, by the offering of his

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* The Brahminical Cord.—This Thread is called Bramah Sutra, because it signifies the Eternal Spirit. Each Brahmin must make this thread for himself and wear it around his neck. It is composed of three threads, and as he weaves them he says: "I shall govern my body, my speech, and my mind; and I know that these three are one." The three rolled into one is the first Triangle of Pythagoras. The unmanifested Monad emerges from

first sacrifice, the feast of his new birth. He then becomes a householder *(grihapati)*, and after having discharged his duties in this capacity, he hands over to his son, who has in the meantime himself attained the same position, the care of all belonging to him, and retires into the forest to pass his days undisturbed in religious works and silent meditations. The highest ideal that a man can reach on earth is to become a *yati* (self-conqueror), or *sannyasi* (self-renouncer). The latter offers no more sacrifices, he is raised above the things of the world and of sense, and devotes himself exclusively to the contemplative life. Such is the way to final deliverance *(moksha)* from the bonds of sensual existence."—("Tiele, History of Religion," p. 128.)

Brahminism thus has virtues that are wanting in Buddhism. The Hindu first discharges his filial, conjugal, paternal, and social duties before he thinks of his own salvation. The Buddhists set their own salvation above all worldly duties, and thereby encourage the forced idleness of the individual who must become a mendicant and lead a monastic life, while he still could continue to be a useful member of Society.

The difference between the practical methods of the Buddhists and those of the Brahmins, for attainment to the Supreme Good, resolves itself chiefly into this: that while some of the Brahmins inculcate that the repetition of the syllable Om is an essential part of Spiritual Exercise (Yoga), the Buddhists enter

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the darkness *first* as a Triangle. The *second* manifestation is the perfect Square; the *third* is the Circle of Eternity; and thus is the square made into the circle, or the quadrature of the circle. It signifies the merging of the individual in the Universal: "I and my Father are One." There are three planes of manifestations, and each plane is of *three*. Three times three are nine, the number of perfect initiation, and at each nine the man becomes merged in the Universal; and the circle shows how the man becomes the All.
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upon Spiritual Exercise (Samadhi) by purely mental-psychic means, and discard the repetition of this or any other syllable or words.

Buddhism may to a certain extent be derived from Brahminism.* The Systems have not only the same object in view, namely, to humanise the animal and divinise the human, by freeing the Soul from earthly passions and from the influence of the material world, but the perfect liberation to the Soul-state is identical; although the Brahmin calls Moksha an *Absorption into* the Infinite Being, and the Buddhist considers Nirvana as a total *Annihilation* of the lower self. No doubt this insistance of Gotama Buddha upon a complete Annihilation of the sensual mind, the demon in man, has its good reasons; for where there is no complete Annihilation of the demon in man, there can be no final Absorption of the man in God. None but those who have tried know how difficult it is to give one's self up *unreservedly* to God, who is the undefinable and ineffable No-Thing of Buddhists and Kabbalists, the aim and object of every true Mystic. While the Brahmins thought the Divine absorption would bring about the annihilation of the Demonic, the Buddhists insist upon Annhilation of the sensual selfhood as the indispensable condition for entering upon the Divine Spirit-state of Nirvana. There is a difference not only in words but in views between the two Systems, yet the *object* of their practice is essentially one. The Brahmin Method of Yoga, with its repetition of Om, is more likely to favour a mediumistic condition than the Divine Afflatus; but the Buddhist Samadhi appears to us more simple and also more direct and true. The methods of Mystic Practice are very similar in all Systems; consequently, those of the Brahmins, esoterically considered, differ but little from those of the Buddhists. It is probable that Brahm and Budh are, in the Absolute, identical and not opposed principles. The ethics of both Systems are almost the same, only in external ceremonial lies the chief difference; but on most physical and psychical rules of life they are agreed. Almost all Brahmins and Buddhists are Vegetarians. Both have a high regard for animal life. Both consider continence to be an essential part of Occult Practice; and although the lay followers of both systems are generally married, the monastic life is held to be a higher state, and *Isolation* and the conservation of vital force, as practised by all true Occultists and Mystics, are enjoined by both.

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* *Cf.* Bigandet, Parallel between the Brahmin and Buddhist Religious Orders in "The Life and Legend of Gotama Buddha."

But while Brahminism is a pharisaic Hiero-aristocracy, Buddhism is a Republic of Purity. While the modern Brahmins, forgetful of their earlier traditions, consider *their* race alone capable of Divine enlightenment, the Buddhists believe in the self-election of the individual to the Supreme Good. Consequently, while Brahminism degenerates, Buddhism regenerates. For the Brahmins hold to physical birth, which is subject to imperfection; but the Buddhists make the Spiritual birth, which is true and perfect, the central point of their System. Although one born of Brahmin parents may not be fit to be a Brahmin, whoever is spiritually re-born is fit to receive Divine Knowledge. Brahminism is built upon heredity, but Buddhism as a System has a rejuvenating principle, which, although it also exists in Brahminism, is there more latent than developed by its very limitation to one race. For God favours no man or race, He lives in all equally. It is man who ascends, and the higher he ascends the more he becomes Divine. The policy of the Brahmin is: the Demon for the world and God for us. But God cannot be imparted by legacy, nor can He *be made* secret. Those who think *they* only have God, have not God but his shadow the demon. God accepts those only who sacrifice the demon in their own Beings. The father cannot die for his son, the husband cannot sacrifice himself for his wife, the child cannot offer its life to save its parents; for the Soul-state is an individual Gift of God to each individual Being, and each must die in his own lower nature before he or she can be accepted by, and become re-born in God. Therefore the Buddhist idea of total Annihilation of the sensual Self, or the demon in man, may be considered as correct. Nirvana *is* Annihilation of self-hood; and it is that very Annihilation that brings us to Nirvana. What is Nirvana? It is the Manifestation of the Absolute, the latent Divine Soul, which, when manifested, is known as the Divine Spirit. But let the Buddhists themselves define it.

In a dialogue between Milinda and Nagasena, given by Spence Hardy and quoted by Max Müller (" Chips," Vol. I.),—" The Meaning of Nirvana," the following definition is given of this mysterious word :—

" *Nagasena.* Can a man, by his natural strength, go from the city of Sagal to the forest of Himala ?

Milinda. Yes.

Nagasena. But could any man, by his natural strength, bring the forest of Himala to this city of Sagal ?

Milinda. No.

Nagasena. In like manner, though the fruition of the paths may cause the accomplishment of Nirvana, no cause by which Nirvana is produced can be declared. The path that leads to Nirvana may be pointed out, but not any cause for its production. Why ? because that which constitutes Nirvana is beyond all computation,—a mystery not to be understood. . . . It cannot be said to be produced, nor, that it is not produced ; that it is past, or future, or present. Nor can it be said that it is the seeing of the eye, or the hearing of the ear, or the smelling of the nose, or the tasting of the tongue, or the feeling of the body.

Milinda. Then you speak of a thing that is not ; you merely say that Nirvana is Nirvana ;—therefore there is no Nirvana.

Nagasena. Great king, Nirvana is.

Milinda. Does the being who acquires it, attain something that has previously existed ?—or is it his own product, a formation peculiar to himself ?

Nagasena. Nirvana does not exist previously to its reception ; nor is it that which was brought into existence. Still to the being who attains it, there is Nirvana. . . . He who is the most meritorious (Bhagavat) does exist.

Milinda. Then can you point out to me the place in which he exists ?

Nagasena. Our Bhagavat has attained Nirvana, where there is no repetition of birth. We cannot say that he is here, or that he is there. When a fire is extinguished, can it be said that it is here or that it is there ? Even so, our Buddha has attained

Nirvana. He is like the sun that has set behind the Astagiri mountain. It cannot be said that he is here, or that he is there: but we can point him out by the discourses delivered. In them he lives."*

ESOTERIC BUDDHISM.

Buddhism, in its Esoteric form, is said to be identical with the ancient and eternal Wisdom-Religion; the pre-historic Buddhism or Hermetic Theosophy, that we would suggest can be traced in all the Mystic Myths and Occult allegories of antiquity.

As we anticipate all our readers are, or will become, acquainted with Mr. Sinnett's work on "Esoteric Buddhism," this section is solely intended to call attention to the doctrine of the sevenfold Constitution of Man, of his gradual evolution through a sevenfold planetary chain of worlds, and to point out its correspondence to other Esoteric teachings on the same deeply interesting subject. We will, therefore, at once put before the reader the tabular form of the said Constitution, as we find it in Mr. Sinnett's book, to which we will add that of the spiritual states of the Soul, and of the sevenfold Constitution of the Universe, the latter as obtained from one of the spiritual chiefs of the Theosophical Society of Madras. First it must be remembered that Psychically, as well as Physically, Man is a Microcosm or Universe, and the Universe or Macrocosm is as Man.

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* *Cf.* Also *Rhys David's "Buddhism,"* p. 120, for various definitions of the word Nirvana.

CONSTITUTION OF MAN.

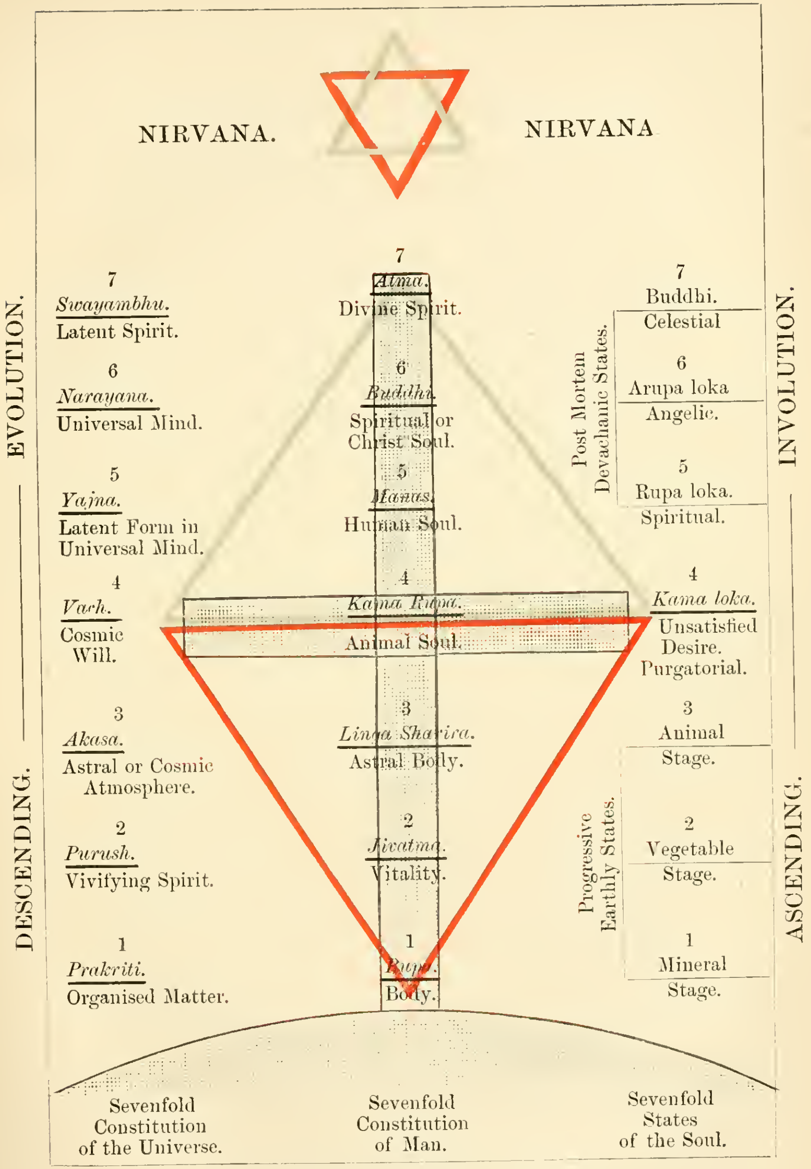
English.	*Sanscrit.*
1. The Body	*Rupa.*
2. Life-Principle or Vitality ...	*Jivatma.*
3. Astral Body	*Linga Sharira.*
4. Animal Soul or Will (The Ego)	*Kama Rupa.*
5. Human Soul or Mind ...	*Manas.*
6. Spiritual Soul	*Buddhi.*
7. Divine Spirit	*Atma.*

CONSTITUTION OF THE UNIVERSE.

English.	*Sanscrit.*
1. Earth or Matter	*Prakriti.*
2. Vivifying Universal Spirit ...	*Purush.*
3. Astral or Cosmic Atmosphere	*Maya or Akasa.*
4. Cosmic Will	*Vach.*
5. Astral Light or Universal Illusion	*Yajna.*
6. Universal Mind	*Narayana.*
7. Latent Spirit	*Swayambhu.*

The accompanying Plate is an attempt to set before the reader a simultaneous and comprehensive view of the teaching of Esoteric Buddhism concerning these three important doctrines, viz., the Constitution of the Universe, the Constitution of Man, and his Spiritual states, both during and after earth life.

It will be perceived that these principles are numbered beginning from the outer inwards; the first being, of course, the mere outside of the casket which contains the seventh, the Jewel of Great Price, the


NIRVANA.
NIRVANA
EVOLUTION.
DESCENDING.
INVOLUTION.
ASCENDING.
7
Swayambhu.
Latent Spirit.
6
Narayana.
Universal Mind.
5
Yajna.
Latent Form in Universal Mind.
4
Vach.
Cosmic Will.
3
Akasa.
Astral or Cosmic Atmosphere.
2
Purush.
Vivifying Spirit.
1
Prakriti.
Organised Matter.
7
Atma.
Divine Spirit.
6
Buddhi.
Spiritual or Christ Soul.
5
Manas.
Human Soul.
4
Kama Rupa.
Animal Soul.
3
Linga Sharira.
Astral Body.
2
Jivatma.
Vitality.
1
Rupa.
Body.
Post Mortem Devachanic States.
7
Buddhi.
Celestial
6
Arupa loka
Angelic.
5
Rupa loka.
Spiritual.
4
Kama loka.
Unsatisfied Desire.
Purgatorial.
Progressive Earthly States.
3
Animal
Stage.
2
Vegetable
Stage.
1
Mineral
Stage.
Sevenfold Constitution of the Universe.
Sevenfold Constitution of Man.
Sevenfold States of the Soul.

An ambitious attempt to present
The Sevenfold Constitution of Man and of the Universe
In the form of a Diagram.

Shekinah, within its most interior foldings. But in order to make these sevenfold PRINCIPLES, STATES, and SENSES, apparent to the outward eye as well as to the mind, we have taken the liberty of representing them as rising from the earth in the form of a cross, which is the true symbol of man, as shown in the architecture of the Christian Church; but which was used by the ancients as a sacred *symbol* long before the Christian era, nay, so ancient is it that it is even seen on the monograms of some of the planets. It is a double emblem, whose mysteries would fill a volume, suffice it to say, it is the true emblem of man and woman, or *male and female.* The figure of a cross, says Plato, is in the universe; its four interspaces extend to Infinity—North, South, East, and West. And thus man stands, with Infinity all around him and Eternity within, rising from Earth to Heaven, like the Tree of Life. The cross-beam, representing his arms of *power and of glory,** may also represent the Tree of Knowledge of Good and Evil (and does so in Hermetic Theosophy);

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* In signing themselves with the sign of the cross when uttering the last words of the Lord's Prayer, Catholics express more than many of them are probably aware of; thus: On saying "*for Thine is the Kingdom,*" they *first* touch the forehead with the back of the thumb, and *then* the vital *region* of the heart; thus indicating the *first* as the Throne, "Mercy-seat," and dwelling-place of the Lord (or as Divine Wisdom, the *Lady*) of the Kingdom. At "*the power and the glory,*" the thumb touches first the right and then the left shoulder ("The right hand of power,"—"At the left hand of Thy glory"). At "*For ever and ever. Amen,*" the thumb is laid on the forefinger of the same hand in the form of a cross and raised to the lips, which seal it with a kiss, expressive of "*So be it,*" or Amen!

it stands in the midst of the garden, dividing the higher from the lower principles, the spiritual from the material, the good from the evil.

It will be perceived we have enclosed said cross in a double triangle of two colours, which, when interlaced as the one above the cross, represents the "Mystery of Mysteries," and is a geometrical synthesis of the whole Occult doctrine. Thus interlaced it is called by the Jewish Kabbalists the "Seal of Solomon," and it is the Sri-antara of the Archaic Aryan Temple. It represents Deity in its Supreme Essence, "Male and Female," "Love and Wisdom," and contains the Squaring of the Circle, the so-called Philosopher's Stone, the great problems of Life and Death, and the Mystery of Good and Evil (viz., Matter united to, or separated from, Spirit), &c., &c. Thus, when drawn as we have represented them around the Cross, they are, as will be perceived, *separated*, and will only unite, intersect, and cross each other by degrees, the lower triangle rising higher and higher as the man attains to the higher states. The dark or fire nature rising from the earth to meet the descending light triangle of heavenly hue, the Wisdom that cometh from above (as you often see the light or flame fall from above on re-lighting a recently extinguished candle). When at last the Red line shall reach the Blue line at the Sixth Principle—spiritual Soul (the Bride from Heaven, or Christ state), the Triangles will be found to be perfectly interlaced, and the Union complete, as in the Divine or double Triangle represented in Nirvana.

This centre corresponds to the central Principle in man, the axis on which his character must turn. This fourth Principle is called *Kama Rupa;* it is the WILL, or Animal Soul, for it is possessed by all animals as well as by man. It also corresponds physically to the great ganglionic centre, called the Solar (or Soular) Plexus, and by the ancients the "*Male Brain*" and the "Abdominal Brain,"* which is the first to live

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* "*Majapperikos* (or brains behind the diaphragm). The Solar Plexus was thus called by the ancient Greeks, and was supposed by them to have a large share in our internal feelings and sensations, in addition to the functions usually assigned to *these* nervous bodies, commonly called the Epigastric Centre (upon the stomach), though it is situated, properly speaking, *behind* the stomach, generally called the pit of the stomach. This Organic Plexus *moves the heart.*

"In all ages, and in all countries, the site of these organs has been supposed to be the site and centre of emotion and feeling; thus we hear, in colloquial language, of sensations or feelings in the breast or bosom, to which people apply the hand, saying their heart 'jumps for joy,' 'throbs with pleasure,' is as 'light as a feather' or as 'heavy as lead'; but as far as the *heart* is concerned, we might just as well say the stomach, the liver, or the spleen. The cause is seated far deeper than these, behind such organs where the 'Genius' sits watching over every organ and function; the heart being a mere figurative expression. This Genius is named the Solar Plexus, and is the web of nerves carrying off and distributing the vital power to all the vital organs. The heart's action and circulation of the blood by night and day is kept moving alone by this Organic Centre, the source of vital energy, vital heat, motor power,—this medium of continuous action always going on night and day independent of the will, and without which sleep would be death, and we could commit suicide by a wish, by stopping the heart's action as we would stop the pendulum of a clock. From this sympathetic centre first springs that current of vital force whose action commences with and never and the last to die of the nervous system—the receptacle, vehicle, and centre, of vitality, sensation, instinct, and feeling, as well as of intuition, nutrition, the heart's movements, the circulation of the blood, and that which continues life in sleep, otherwise we should die. This Soul or Sun is the life germ, the first created in the inter-uterine or fœtal state, and the *only* brains in the bodies of some inferior animals. It is also the Telegraphic Centre of the human body, with its wires diverging in all directions, and particularly connecting it with the "*Female* brain," the Cerebro Spinal system, by two nervous cords, situated one on each side of the

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ceases during life—for those organs whose fibres are furnished with motor power or stimulus from this source, whatever that may be, work the hardest, live the longest, and are the last to die; and even when removed from their connection with the body, this vital power or impulse continues the principle of life for a time with us, and with some animals still thrills the frame and clings to them for hours.

"In support of this ganglionic centre being a Brain, as it was designated by the ancients, the '*Male Brain*,' we may venture to say that there is at all events some analogy with regard to its structure; for as most physiologists are aware, we find embedded in its substance the precisely same nerve corpuscles as we find in the brain itself, and which are by many philosophers believed to be the source from which the thinking powers are evolved.

"It is well known that the mind or will is not engaged in all our functions, or even in all our feelings, more especially in that class of sensations that form the subject of our internal sensations. Sensation may be either mental or physical, or partake of both. Of the distinct kinds of feeling of which we are conscious, in the one the *mind* is concerned, and in the other the *senses* or the sensitive media. It is through a sense or sensation, in the first place, by which they make themselves felt or known, and that we pick up the materials for all the knowledge we possess, though genespinal column. It is called the *Solar Plexus* from its rounded form, constitutes the centre of the Organic or Vital nerves, and presides over the internal organic functions, and is hence called the Organic Sphere, as the *female brain* presides over the intellectual functions, and is called the Organ of the Mind.

From what has been said, it will readily be perceived that this Fourth Principle is the seat of Life, as the heart, which is also in the centre, is called the seat of Love; and morally it is so, for what a man loves that he *wills*, and his every effort during his earth-life should be to elevate his love and his will, above the

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rally supposed to be an act of the mind. Sensation in itself is more a primary power, which the mind-brain may or may not make use of or reflect upon; so that it is possible that we may *feel without thinking*, or the sensitive media alone are the recipients of the impression. These are sometimes termed *sense* perceptions, as distinguished from purely mental phenomena.—It is a different kind of nervous force from that eliminated by the brain and spinal cord, and a principle not to be found or furnished by any other part of the living body; but, as we have before observed, we find embedded in the substance of these ganglionic bodies precisely the same nerve corpuscles as we find in the brain itself, and which are by many philosophers believed to be the source from which the thinking powers are evolved." (Dr. Henry Scott, M.D.)

I wrote down the preceding some years ago at the verbal dictation of Dr. Scott, availing myself of the first sheet of paper at hand. It was not until he had finished dictating that I found I had quite accidentally written it on a paper on which I had previously noted a few words from Higgins' Anacalypsis, which I had been reading; thus these words really form the heading to what Dr. Scott dictated, and that heading reads as follows:

"IMMANUEL—God with us.

"ALMA—Virgin—The thought conceived in, and proceeding three lower animal or earthly Principles, so that through the cultivation of his *fifth* Principle, MANAS, or Human Soul, which is his true *personality*, he may, when called away from earth-life, rise above the *fourth* Spiritual state, KAMA LOCA, the Astral sphere immediately surrounding this earth, and which corresponds to the *fourth* Principle, KAMA RUPA or merely animal Soul (which can be seen by glancing at our coloured plate), and therefore the abode of all earthly and earth-bound "*Spirits*," so-called, though Souls would be the better designation.

The Ego or Self-hood is centred in this middle Prin-

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from, the female Brain or DIVINE WISDOM, (it is the name in modern Hebrew); the same as for the Brain. (Alma in Spanish means Soul.)

Alma-Mater—Fostering-Mother; the name of a University, (where Wisdom is imparted).

It will at once be seen how extraordinary was this coincidence, and how significant this simple circumstance in its silent yet most eloquent confirmation of the hypothesis of the ancients of the Male and Female Brain. This generation is said to be of *Neck*, and the next generation will be of *Head* development, and thus destined to complete the stature of Man in the *Human form Divine*, as the higher senses shall be developed in him.

How significant, then, is the construction of the human form made in the image of God ("male and female created He them"); thus *Two in One* both spiritually and physically. How suggestive the Goddess of Wisdom of Ancient Mythology, springing armed and helmeted from the *Brain* of Jupiter. How significant again the form of the representative Ark of the Covenant built by Moses after the *Heavenly* pattern, with its Golden candlestick of *seven* Branches! and its Laver, which corresponds so evidently to the *fourth* Principle, and its Holy of Holies to the *fifth*, and its Mercy-seat to the *sixth*, as we see them represented in the accompanying coloured plate. The Mercy-seat which Moses was ciple, which is the Will or Love, described by the Hermetic Theosophists as the Fire Nature, which can go backwards or forwards, "imagining into the first or second Ternary," as its dominant love wills it to do; returning either to the lower states from which, as an animal Soul it has been evolved; or ascending by progressive development to the higher states into which it is destined to be involved.

This Fourth Principle, and State, could be better understood after a study of the Kabbala, with its doctrine of the seven Spirits of God, the work of seven days, the seven planets, &c., &c., and more particularly after a

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commanded by the Lord to "put above the Ark," saying, "And there will I meet thee, and I will commune with thee from above the Mercy-seat" (Exodus xxv. 21 & 22).

The Ark of the Covenant was a type to the children of an earlier generation of better things to come, which better things are now at our very doors. The symbolic Ark has long been lost, but the real and living one which it represented is now to appear as the true Ark of the Covenant of God with the children of men. That Covenant was that the seed of the *woman* should eventually bruise the head of the Serpent. The Serpent represents Materiality, or the three lower Principles of Esoteric Buddhism derived from the earth; the so-called seed of the woman is the perfected humanity or Son of God conceived by the Holy Spirit in the immaculate womb of the pure Virgin or *Alma*, the *feminine Soul*, Sixth principle, BUDDHI, or spiritual Soul of Esoteric Buddhism; the Divine *Sound*, or sixth Essence of Hermetic Theosophy; the "WORD," or living breathing embodiment and expression of Divine Thought of the Christians. Thus Christ was called the Word, because he was the offspring of the seed of the woman, or *Female Brain*, the *expression* of Divine Wisdom. "Love is masculine because it brings forth by impulse without labour; Wisdom is feminine because it brings forth by labour."

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careful study of the Theosophical Mystics, who also hold to the doctrine of the sevenfold nature of all things, resultant upon the sevenfold nature of the Divine Essence which they explain as follows:—

1. Astringency.
2. Mobility.
3. Anguish.
IV. FIRE.
5. Light—Love.
6. Sound.
7. Substantiality (spiritual).

The *first*, Astringency, is the principle of all contractive force; it is Desire, and it draws. Rocks are hard because this first quality is dormant in them. The *second*, Mobility, the sweet quality, is the principle of expansion and movement; the pliant forms of plants, fluids, &c. The *third*, Anguish, the bitter quality, is generated from the conflict of the first two; it is manifest in the anguish and strife of being; it may become heavenly rapture or hellish torment; its influence is dominant in sulphur.

The FOURTH, FIRE, is the transition or middle quality. In the quality of fire, Light and Darkness meet. It is the root of the Soul of man, the source on either side of heaven or hell, between which our nature stands. The fire-spirit is the lower Soul of man, or *Anima Bruta* possessed both by animals and by men, for it has the centre of nature, with its four forms, for its fiery might. It strikes up the fire itself, and itself makes "the wheel of the essence." The first three qualities belong more especially to the nature of the Father, or God in His wrath, when He is described as "a consuming Fire," for, separated from the second Ternary, they are the occasion of spiritual death, of wrath, striving, necessity, in other words, of Evil. The last three qualities appertain to the nature of the Mother (or feminine nature), when the smouldering and wrathful fire finds the sweet meekness of the Love quality, and bursts forth into the bright and joyous flame, the source of Light and Love, of Wisdom and of Glory, in other words, of Good, produced by the *union* of the male and female qualities, as their *separation* is the origin and cause of Evil.

Man is the arbiter of his own destiny, and voluntarily develops, from the depths of his own nature, his heaven or his hell; while adding to the happiness or misery of those around him by exerting self-control, or giving way to self-indulgence; for the real cause of all the hideous sin, and cruel suffering and misery we see around us, proceeds originally from selfishness, from that terrible love of self, that personality which so vehemently or so insidiously accentuates the *I* and the *you*, and which is the outcome of the predominance of the three lower Principles, or qualities, which can only be elevated and controlled by the cultivation of the higher or more spiritual Principles described by Hermetic Theosophists as the union of the hard and dark with the love and light, or of the male and female qualities, and by the Ancient Wisdom-Religion as the fifth and sixth Principles, the Human and Spiritual Soul.

Thus the *sixth* quality is described by the Hermetists as *Sound.* In Heaven the harmony of the spheres; in man the five senses, and the *gift* of speech, or rather The WORD, or *manifestation* of the Divinity; thus Christ is called *The Word*, the utterance of the Divine Name, *name* signifying the *expressional* nature, or its *outward manifestation.* And as he attains to the sixth, or Christ-spirit, or Principle, he will develope the *sixth* sense, or Spiritual Soul, which is that of the Intuition, and the perception of things spiritual and eternal; he will then become cognisant of the subjective world around him, as his earlier senses have made him cognisant of the objective world, or world of sense.

The *seventh* Principle is the Divine Spirit itself, described as spiritual substantiality.

Man as yet has only developed five senses; Esoteric Buddhism teaches that as he attains to the sixth and seventh states, he will develope the sixth and seventh senses. The dawning of the sixth sense can indeed already be perceived in some advanced minds; and books have lately been published which clearly indicate that the time is near for the development of the sixth sense. We allude to such books as "THE PERFECT WAY," "MORGENRÖTHE," "THE TWO IN ONE," "SYMPNEUMATA," &c., &c. The real Sympneumata is man in his duality, male and female, *two in one*, as he was created at the beginning, in "*the image of God*," and as he is destined again to become as he rises, and developes the sixth sense, or Spiritual Soul. This is figured in Scripture as the coming of the Bride, and as the marriage of the King's Son.

Concerning the immediate Spiritual State of man after death, ESOTERIC BUDDHISM teaches that the three lower Principles appertaining to the outward body are abandoned and left on the earth from which they proceeded and to which they belong. That which is the real man himself, viz., the four higher and superior Principles, pass into the Spiritual World corresponding to, and immediately surrounding, our own, it being in fact the Astral plane of this world, it is the Purgatory of the Roman Catholic Church, and is called in Sanscrit KAMA LOCA (See coloured Plate). Here a division takes place, the two highest Principles on the one hand, drawing the fifth (the Human Soul) and real personality, in one direction, while the fourth (the Animal Soul) draws it back earthwards on the other. Its purest, most elevated, and spiritual portions cling to the sixth Principle, and are elevated by it, its lower instincts, impulses, and recollections adhering to the *fourth*, rèmain in KAMA LOCA, the "Purgatorial," or Astral sphere, immediately surrounding the earth.

Thus the best elements, or true Essence, of the late personality ascends to the state designated in Buddhist Theosophy as DEVACHAN, corresponding in some respects to our European ideas of Heaven, not, however, the highest and absolute *Kingdom* of Heaven, or NIRVANA, which is the key-note of Buddhism, as of Christianity, and of all religions, for the great end of the whole stupendous evolution of humanity is to cultivate human Souls for their involution, or, in other words, to render them fit for that to us at present inconceivable condition, which is only reached when man is made "*perfect even as the Father is perfect,*" and the Son of man has become the Son of God; which can only be accomplished through innumerable incarnations during the progress of the individual Entity through the sevenfold seven Planetary Rounds. Thus does this Eternal Wisdom-Religion confirm the words of Christ, and teach us by the example of the Infinite Love and Intelligence to pardon our enemies and give them opportunities of repairing their shortcomings even "*until seventy times seven.*"

It is true that at each birth the personality differs from that of the previous, and of the next succeeding birth, but Esoteric Buddhism teaches us that although the personalities ever change, the one line of life along which they are strung, like pearls on a string, runs unbroken; it is ever *that particular line*, never any other. The line or thread of life is therefore our true individuality; an individual vital undulation, "TWO IN ONE," thus dual and *indivi-sible* for ever. Now this life thread on which our innumerable personalities are strung in our career through the ages, this *individable* duality, this Eternal "TWO IN ONE," is in reality our sixth and seventh Principles, which began in Nirvana on the subjective side of Nature, as the Light and Heat undulation through æther began at its dynamic source, ever flows through the objective side of Nature, and tends through many cyclic changes back to Nirvana. Thus do we see how the Life undulation is our true individuality, being, in fact, our Divine and Spiritual self, and each of its series of natal manifestations is a separate personality, the new dress or form it invests to further and continue its more perfect development; or, poetically speaking, one of the many pearls of our One Life's Rosary.

As we let fall each pearl and pass on to the next, and the next, as they successively present themselves on the ceaseless chain, we see an eternity of change, and that our present life, with all its seeming weight of care and sorrow, is but as one out of the pearls we let fall as we pass on to the next, and we recognize both the worth and the worthlessness, both the significance and the insignificance of this temporary existence. Its worth and its significance, in as much as every act and every thought lives in its effect on our subsequent career, producing KARMA either for good or ill. If *we* suffer, it is *our own* suffering, brought on *ourselves*, if not in this present life in some previous one, which was the progenitor of our present happiness or misery, for Karma is the inevitable law of consequences, in other words, "that which we sow we must also reap," and not something which we did not sow. Thus each earth-life is valuable for the lesson it teaches us, and the lift it gives us onwards and upwards, if properly understood and utilized; but it is not worth the worry and the agony we too often give ourselves about every sorrow and disappointment we meet with, as if it would occasion our misery for ever afterwards, when the next turn of the ever shifting glass will change the whole pattern in our Kaleidescope, and all the colours will fall into their right places, harmonizing by the everlasting triangle on which it is based, and thus each turn of the glass serves but to produce a fuller form than the last; or, in other words, to add another and probably a purer and whiter pearl to our Rosary.

Our existence is eternal, but it is composed of an eternity of existences, or manifestaions, the One Life-thread running through all. To be truly happy we must try fully to understand our perpetual changefulness, and the result will be that we shall learn to live in the Now, and to realize that all Time is ours, because we are the children of the Eternal, to whom "one day is as a thousand years, and a thousand years as one day"; the present is infinite, and infinity is our present, a future would be finite; therefore, the one day is ever lasting on, it is ours now, and ever will be ours, just as much as it is to-day, for it will ever be one perpetual Now.* And yet we and all things are perpetually changing; from moment to moment we are not the same, every exhalation and every inspiration of the breath changes us by so much physically, as every line we read, every thought we think, changes us mentally, so that by the end of each day we are no longer exactly the same, either morally or materially, that we were at its beginning; but our change should be from glory to glory, and will be so if we properly utilize the Now which is ours.

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* "The curtains of yesterday drop down, the curtains of to-morrow roll up; but yesterday and to-morrow both are."—(*Sartor Resartus.*)

It is difficult to realize this perpetual, this eternal Now, which is ever lasting on, and yet ever changing and bringing changes. Let us try to do so by narrowing the view and calling to remembrance One little year out of the thousands; which year we know is composed of months, and those months of weeks, and those weeks of days, and those days of hours, and those hours of minutes, and those minutes of seconds, marked by the ceaseless tick of the everlasting Clock of Time.

Thus it will appear that every perfect man is regenerated, or twice born, and each time from the centre of the *Cross*, or the Union of male and female, *first* materially, *taking root downwards* and drawing from the earth the materials wherewith to form and nourish the body, and from the Vital atmosphere (described in the PLATE as Vivifying Spirit) the JIVATMA, or Vitality, which animates it, and builds it up in, and *on*, the Astral form which exists before the outward body can become visible, by assimilating the material that makes it so.

Every molecule of matter, however *minute*, has a Vital Spirit, or partakes of this JIVATMA, which is not by any means one with the Divine Spirit of man, the *Atma*, or seventh Principle, for that is "God."

Without this *third* Principle, the LINGA SHARIRA, or Astral form, possessed by animals as well as by man, there could be no outward body; for it is evident that the particles or atoms of matter would not build up of themselves without a form to build upon, "*it may* *chance of wheat, or of some other grain, for God giveth it a body as it hath pleased Him, and to every seed his own body*" (Cor. xv. 38). It is therefore the same for all, and the particles of matter must have a form to build on, it may chance of man, or of some other animal, to every seed his own body. "*There is a natural body and there is a spiritual body. The first man is of the earth, earthy; the second Man is the Lord from Heaven. Howbeit that was not first which is spiritual, but that which is natural, and afterwards that which is spiritual*" (1 Cor. xv. 44—46).

But to become Spiritual, to become "the Lord from Heaven" the man must be "*born again*," born a *second* time, always from the Centre of the Cross, the Love Centre, the union of the male and female principles, but this time he is born of the *Spiritual union* of these principles in his own nature. It is the Virgin womb in *our own fifth* Principle, MANAS, or "Human Soul," that immediately conceives by the Holy Spirit. It is the seed of the *Woman*, or feminine Principle in man, that is destined to "bruise the Serpent's head," in other words, to overcome Materiality by Spirituality, and when this Virgin Soul is prepared to receive it that seed will take root and germinate, and the son of man will be "*raised up*," and shooting upwards like the Tree of Life, whose branches tend heavenwards, will draw its nutriment from above, from the Spiritual and intellectual Light diffused by the Universal Soul, and dispensed by the Divine Spirit, our ever living Mother and Father, "God."

Until the primary substances are organized, man as a personality is *not* ; therefore he is first born physically, and taking root *downwards* draws his material substance from the earth, as do his inferiors; he must then be newly born, or "*born again*," spiritually, in order to become a spiritual being, but always from the Love Centre (his Will); and in order to have Goodness and Wisdom and "Universal Love," instead of *Self-Love*, he must rise heavenwards and draw his intellectual food for the mind, and his benevolent food for the heart from the never-failing Spiritual Source.

There is another Spiritual State which has found no place in our tabular representation, because it does not form one of the Seven, but as Nirvana is above and beyond these, being the Supreme state of Divinity; its antithesis, called in Sanscrit "AVITCHI," might be said to be below and beyond in an opposite direction, were it possible to localise a *State*.

There is yet another ladder of *seven degrees* or stages of ascent from earth to heaven. Jacob's ladder occupies a conspicuous place among the symbols of Freemasonry. Its true origin was lost among the worshippers of the Pagan rites, but the symbol itself was retained. Among them it was always made to consist of seven rounds, which might, as Dr. Oliver suggests, have been in allusion either to the seven stories of the Tower of Babel, or to the Sabbatical period. In the Persian Mysteries of Mithras the ladder of seven rounds was symbolical of the Soul's approach to perfection. These rounds were called *gates;* and in allusion to them, the candidate was made to pass through seven dark and winding caverns, which process was called the ascent of the ladder of perfection. Each of these caverns was the representative of a state of existence through which the soul was supposed to pass in its progress from the first to the last, or the state of truth. Each round of the ladder was said to be of metal, of increasing purity, and was dignified with the name of its protecting planet. Some idea of the construction of this symbolic ladder may be obtained from the following table:

7. Gold	Sun	Love.
6. Silver	Moon	Wisdom.
5. Quicksilver	Mercury	Understanding.
4. Copper	Venus	Beauty.
3. Lead	Earth	Flesh.
2. Iron	Mars	Power.
1. Tin	Jupiter	Council.

Among the Hebrews the rounds of the ladder were originally supposed to be infinite. The Essenians first reduced them to seven, which were called the Sephiroth, whose names were Strength, Mercy, Beauty, Eternity, Glory, the Foundation, and the Kingdom.

> "At its base this ladder touches the earth, and the angels on it denote Souls descending into incarnation, even as the Kabbala says, to the lowest degree of the Universe, or matter at its nethermost point—and ascending again to heaven. At the foot of the ladder at *night* Jacob (the pilgrim Soul), lies *asleep*, having for pillow a stone, symbol of matter at the lowest point. As the place of the greatest darkness and division from God the spot is called Luza, or *separation*. When Jacob *awakes*, however, the

Soul knows that even in the lowest abyss of matter there is no real separation from the Divine presence and life, hence his exclamation on awaking, 'Indeed the Lord is in this place.' And he called its name Bethel (House of God), which before was Luza (separation)."—*From a Lecture by Dr. A. Kingsford, President of the Hermetic Society.*

But to return to the Constitution of Man, which so immediately concerns and interests us, we must remember the Esoteric Doctrine teaches, that the three superior principles of the seven which constitute man are not yet fully developed in the actual state of humanity; but when man reaches a perfect state on earth he will be endowed with all the seven principles, and seven consequent senses, as some truly divine men, to whom we could point, who have come as Messengers to this planet, were certainly endowed in the past.

The State, to which we give the name of *Death*, has only influence over the three first principles, viz., the Body, the Vitality, and the Astral Form. The first, as we know, is from the earth, and is returned again to earth there to be decomposed, and in process of time to enter into other combinations and go to form other material bodies. The Vitality is also dissipated at the death of the body and goes to animate other organisms, being like the molecules which formed the body, not confined to any individual, but a universal Cosmic principle; and the Astral Form, which is a reflection of the physical body, although it may linger for a longer or a shorter time around the home it has left, and is sometimes perceived as the shade of the departed, wearing as it does precisely the same appearance, also fades out at last having completed its mission, which was to guide the Jivatma in its work of construction to build up the molecular atoms in the form which they clothed. These three lower Principles are entirely derived from the Earth and its atmosphere, and are consequently perishable as *form*, although indestructible as regards the molecules of which they were formed, but they are entirely separated from man at his death, and go to animate other organisms.

Not only man, but the Universe itself is composed of seven Principles, and the Supreme or Seventh Principle, animates this uninterrupted stream of life throughout Nature, uniting by continued sequence the innumerable transformations of the one life which constitutes the complete series. The Great Pyramid of Egypt, built upon the *triangle* and the *square*, symbolized this Arcanum; its seventh point, ("*The head-stone of the corner, which the builders refused,*")* rising gloriously towards heaven, as if piercing the skies; a symbol to all time of the perfection of the Christ, or Seventh Principle in man.

In order to comprehend this most ancient doctrine which appears to throw so much light on the history of humanity, and so perfectly to account for the otherwise inexplicable difference between man and man, and to reconcile such inequality with the Justice of God, we must fix our attention on the three higher Principles, the Fourth, Fifth, and Sixth, and see the gradual rise of the merely sensual man, through the human to the Divine being, or perfected humanity (in other words, the Son of God); and say not such perfection is impossible and can never be attained, for then were the injunction useless, and but vain the words "*Be ye perfect even as your Father is perfect.*"

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* See Matt. xxi. 42; Luke xx. 17; Mark xii. 10; Psalm cxviii. 22.

The Fifth Principle or Human Soul is the real personality of the man, though but too often during earth life the personality is centred, as we have seen, in the Fourth Principle, the WILL, which is but the Animal Soul, or Soul possessed by animals as well as by man. This Fourth or centre of the Seven Principles constituting man, is the Axis on which all the others turn. On passing this Fourth Principle we come into the region of the Psychic Being. But it is the highest principle in the animal; and were it not for the development of his Fifth Principle, the Human Soul, man would not rise above the level of the beast, for without the ascent of the Understanding above the Will, he would have no capacity of thinking, or of speaking from thought, or of acting from reason, but only by instinct.

Love itself, and the affections which belong to it, have their abode in the KAMA RUPA, the Fourth Principle Will, or Egoism; while Science, Intelligence, and Understanding have their abode in the MANAS, the Fifth Principle or Human Soul, thus it follows that all good and all evil belong to the Will; for whatever proceeds from love is called good, although it may be evil; but what a man loves, he wills, and that to him seems and is good. The Will, therefore, is the Axis on which the other Principles turn, and such as the love and wisdom are, such are the Will and understanding, the

Will being the receptacle of love, and the understanding of wisdom; which two make the man and his quality.

Since this is so, it is easy to perceive that the MANAS or Fifth Principle is as yet but feebly developed in humanity, the great majority alas! with whom we are brought into daily contact have scarcely risen above the Fourth Principle, the KAMA RUPA (Animal Soul, or *Self*-Love), which indeed we may see is generally speaking very highly developed in them.

If the Fifth Principle, MANAS (Human Soul, Mind or Understanding), is so little developed amongst men, the Sixth is still less so, and may be said as yet to exist but in embryo, for we have only occasional glimpses of it. Its development is the aim to which all the efforts of our higher and interior nature should tend and aspire; it is the degree of perfection after which we were commanded to strive by one who had attained unto it.

As we have seen, the Fourth Principle, KAMA RUPA, is the Axis on which all the others turn. In the early natural state it is simply *animal*, as it becomes united to the Fifth Principle it is guided by reason and understanding, and becomes *human*, and by the time it shall have developed and united itself to the Sixth Principle, the BUDDHI (Spiritual Conscience, or Christ-like Soul), it will be enlightened by its divine wisdom and purity, and the nature of its love will be changed from self-love, which but too often engenders hate, to universal love and charity, or love of God, because love of humanity.

The Seventh Principle, ATMA, is the DIVINE SPIRIT ITSELF.

From another point of view we might, it is said with equal truth, assert that the Sixth Principle (the Spiritual Soul), or *Anima Divina*, is the Vehicle of the Divine Spirit, whilst the Fourth (the Animal Soul) *Anima Bruta*, is the Vehicle of the Fifth (the Human Soul, or Understanding). And from yet another standpoint we may regard each of the superior Principles, beginning from the Fourth, as the Vehicle of the One Life, or Spirit.

The division of the Seven Principles in the Constitution of humanity fully explains the reason of the great inequalities existing between man and man; and shows that this is due to no partiality, or unequal distribution of Divine favours, but simply to the state of advancement, or development, at which each has arrived, and that all humanity is on the road to attain the highest, the Divine Soul, and thus eventually to hear the gracious words, "Thou art My beloved Son."

All men are, and ever must be, on different steps of the same ladder leading towards, and reaching up to heaven; all alike are at the same School, but each has to sit first on the lowest seat of the lowest form, and when he attains to the top of the class he passes on to the next form. The forms, as *Forms*, belong to the School, and are always there, but the scholars are ever moving along them, onwards and upwards towards the highest, and none begin at the top class; but some may remain longer at school than others, nay, indeed, some may remain on the lower forms, and even be banished from them at last, and have to wear the Dunce's Cap with Ass's ears, if they persistently refuse to progress, and rise in their class.

The Ass's ears of the said Cap would denote a real retrogression, or return of the human to the animal plane, and we know this is a doctrine held by some ancient Religions of Wisdom; nay, should the Ass continue in his wilfulness to kick against the pricks, and to prefer thistles to Oats, after he has attained to the *knowledge* of better food, he may even be degraded still lower, and have to crawl out his grovelling evil propensities on the *descending* ladder of existences, as a noxious creeping thing: ("On thy belly shalt thou go, and dust shalt thou eat.") For a very true definition of evil is, that it is the *Law* of the *lower nature* still operative in those who have reached a higher plane.

Thus we see that even the very lowest of creeping things have their uses, and as receptacles of cast off evil passions and propensities, serve to keep the atmosphere pure, which otherwise would be so contaminated that the pure and good could no longer breathe And thus evil is gradually eliminated from the planet on the descending scale, returning at last to the dust from whence it came, there finally to go through processes of purification. "Evil is the dark son of earth (Matter) and *Good* the fair daughter of Heaven" (or Spirit), says the Chinese philosopher. "Hence, the place of punishment for most of our sins is the earth, their birthplace and play-ground."

We commenced the subject of Esoteric Buddhism intending merely to give a tabular form of the Constitution of Man and of the Universe, and to show how exactly it fits into, and corresponds with other teachings, both spiritual and physical. Fain would we give some extracts from Mr. Sinnett's entrancing volume concerning the Planetary Chain of Seven Planets, and our successive lives upon them as a corollary and continuation of what we have said concerning the constitution of man, but the subject is of such intense interest that we fear to be carried far beyond our limits; we must therefore only touch in the slightest manner on this circuit, round which all individual spiritual entities have alike to pass, and that passage which is performed in seven Rounds constitutes the Evolution of Man. It is the Spiral (or Spiritual) character of the progress by life-impulses that at the same time developes the various Kingdoms of Nature, and which will account for the gaps or "missing links" now observed in the animated forms which people the earth.*

"The thread of a screw, which is a uniform inclined plane in reality, looks like a succession of steps when examined only along one line parallel to its axis. The Spiritual Monads, which are coming round the system on the animal level, pass on to other worlds when they have performed their turn of animal incarnation here. By the time they come round again they are ready for human incarnation, and there is no necessity now for the upward development of animal *forms* into human *forms*—as these are already waiting for their Spiritual tenants. It is for want of realizing this idea that speculation concerned with physical evolution is so constantly finding itself stopped by dead walls. It is searching for its missing links in a world where it can never find them now, for they were but required for a temporary purpose, and have passed away. Man, says the Darwinian, was once an Ape. Quite true; but the Ape known to the Darwinian will never become a man—*i.e.*, the *form* will not change from generation to generation till the tail disappears and the hands turn into feet and so on. . . . There was a time when these intermediary forms were necessary, but it was inevitable that the intermediate forms should be of a temporary nature and should die out, otherwise we should find the world stocked with missing links of all kinds—animal life creeping by plainly apparent degrees up to manhood, human forms mingling in indistinguishable confusion with those of animals. . . . The forms which have gone on merely repeating themselves for millenniums start afresh into growth, and supply tenements of flesh for the spiritual entities coming round on each stage or plane of existence, and for the intermediate forms there are no longer any tenants offering. Inevitably, therefore, they become extinct. . . . Man, as we know him on this earth, is but half-way through the evolutionary process to which he owes his present development. He will be as much greater, before the destiny of our system is accomplished, than he is now, as he is now greater than the missing link. And that improvement will even be accomplished on this earth, while, in the other worlds of the ascending series, there are still loftier peaks to be scaled. It is utterly beyond the range of faculties untutored in the discernment of Occult mysteries to imagine the kind of life which man will ultimately lead before the zenith of the great cycle is attained." (Esoteric Buddhism, pp. 37 & 43.)

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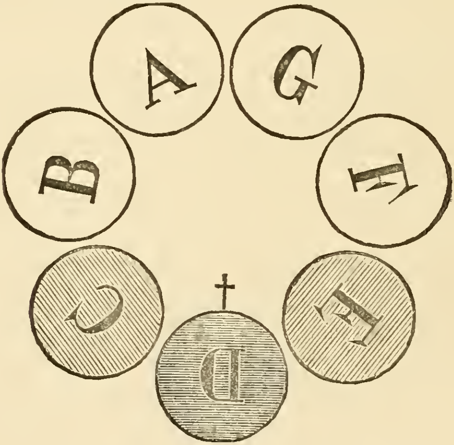
* "Spiral is the etymological cognate of spirit and spiritual. Spirit and movement are related, in a sense they are identical ideas. The spiral is the type of spiritual progression, hence volution; Latin *volos*, to roll or turn, whence Evolution, rolling out, and Involution, rolling in." ("UNIVERSOLOGY," by Stephen Pearl Andrews.)

"Man is evolved in a series of rounds (progressions round the series of worlds), and seven of these rounds have to be accomplished before the destinies of our system are worked out. The round which is at present going on is the *fourth*. 'There are considerations of the utmost possible interest connected with precise knowledge on these points, because each round is, as it were, *specially allotted* to the predominance of one of the Seven Principles in man, and in the regular order of their upward gradation.'

"An individual unit, arriving on a planet for the first time in the course of a round, has to work through seven races with their seven sub-races on that planet before he passes on to the next, and each of those races occupies the earth for a long time. . . . We at present living on this earth—the great bulk of humanity, that is to say, for there are exceptional cases to be considered later—are now going through *the fifth race* of our present *fourth round.* And yet the evolution of that fifth race began about a million of years ago. . . . Within the limits of each race there are seven sub-divisional races, and again within the limits of each sub-division there are seven branch races. Through all these races, roughly speaking, each individual human unit must pass during his stay on earth, each time he arrives there on a round of progress through the planetary system." (Esoteric Buddhism, pp. 48 and 49.)

"It will readily be supposed that the chain of worlds to which this earth belongs are not all prepared for a material existence exactly, or even approximately, resembling our own. There would be no meaning in an organised chain of worlds which were all alike, and might as well have been amalgamated into One. In reality the worlds with which we are connected are very unlike each other, not merely in outward condition, but in that supreme characteristic, the proportion in which spirit and matter are mingled in their constitution. Our own world presents us with conditions in which spirit and matter are, on the whole, evenly balanced in equilibrium. Let it not be supposed on that account that it is very highly elevated in the scale of perfection. On the contrary, it occupies a very low place in that scale. The worlds that are higher in the scale are those in which spirit largely predominates, . . . the farthest back, as also the farthest forward, are the most immaterial, the most ethereal of the whole series; and that this is in all ways in accordance with the fitness of things will appear from the reflection that the farthest forward of the worlds is not a region of finality, but the stepping-stone to the farthest back, as the month of December leads us back again to January. But it is not a climax of development for which the individual monad falls, as by a catastrophe, into the state from which he slowly began to ascend millions of years previously. There is no descent at all, but still ascent and progress. For the spiritual entity, which has worked its way all round the cycle of evolution, at any one of the many stages of development into which the various existences around us may be grouped, begins its next cycle at the next higher stage, and is thus still accomplishing progress as it passes from world Z back again to world A. Many times does it circle in this way, right round the system, but its passage round must not be thought of merely as a circular revolution in an orbit. In the scale of spiritual perfection it is constantly ascending. . . . The process goes on in this way, which may now be described, and which the reader may be better able to follow if he constructs, either on paper or in his own mind, a diagram consisting of *seven circles* (representing the worlds) *arranged in a ring.*



Calling them A B C D, &c., it will be observed from what has been already stated that Circle (or Globe), D, stands for our earth (it being the fourth of the seven). Now the Kingdoms of Nature as known to Occultists, be it remembered, are seven in number, three having to do with Astral and Elementary forces, preceding the grosser material Kingdoms in the order of their development. Kingdom 1 evolves on Globe A, and passes on to B, as Kingdom 2 begins to evolve on A. Carry out this system and, of course, it will be seen that Kingdom 1 is still evolving on Globe G, while Kingdom 7, the Human Kingdom, is evolving on Globe A. But now what happens as Kingdom 7 passes on from Globe A to Globe B? There is no eighth Kingdom to engage the activities of Globe A. The great processes of evolution have culminated in the final tidal-wave of humanity, which as it sweeps on leaves a temporary lethargy of Nature behind. When the life-wave goes on to B in fact, Globe A passes for the time into a state of obscuration. This state is not one of decay, dissolution, or anything that can be properly called death. Decay itself, though its aspect is apt to mislead the mind, is a condition of activity in a certain direction; this consideration affording a meaning to a good deal which is otherwise meaningless in that part of Hindu Mythology which relates to the deities presiding over destruction. The obscuration of a world is a total suspension of its activities. . . . Enormous periods of time are available for this slow process by which the obscured world settles into sleep, for it will be seen that obscuration in each case lasts six times as long as the period of each occupation by the human tide-wave. That is to say, the process which is accomplished as above described, in connection with the passage of the life-wave, from Globe A to Globe B, is repeated all along the chain. When the wave passes to C, B is left in obscuration as well as A. Then D receives the life-wave, and A B C are in obscuration. When the wave reaches G all the preceding six worlds are in obscuration. Meanwhile the life-wave passes on in a certain regular progression, the symmetrical character of which is very satisfactory to scientific instincts. The reader will be prepared to pick up the idea at once, in view of the explanation already given of the way in which humanity evolves through seven great races, during each Round period on a planet—that is to say, during the occupation of such planet by the tidal-wave of life. The fourth race is evidently the middle race of the series. As soon as this middle point is turned, and the evolution of the fifth race on any given planet begins, the preparation for humanity begins on the next. The evolution of the fifth race on E, for example, is commensurate with the evolution, or rather with the revival, of the Mineral Kingdom on D, and so on. That is to say, the evolution of the sixth race on D coincides with the revival of the Vegetable Kingdom on E, the seventh race on D, with the revival of the Animal Kingdom on E, and then when the last monads of the seventh race on D have passed into the subjective state or world of effects, the human period on E begins, and the first race begins its development there. Meanwhile the twilight period of the world, preceding D, has been deepening into the night of obscuration in the same progressive way, and obscuration there definitely sets in when the human period on D passes its half-way point. . . . Recovery for the re-awakening planet is a larger process than its subsidence into rest, for it has to attain a higher degree of perfection against the return of the human life-wave than that at which it was left when the wave last went onward from its shore. But with every new beginning Nature is infused with a vigour of its own—the freshness of a morning. . . . Just as the chain of worlds, treated as a Unity, has its North and South, its spiritual and material poles, working from spirituality, *down through* materiality, up to spirituality again, so the Rounds of mankind constitute a similar series, which the chain of Globes itself might be taken to symbolise. In the evolution of man, in fact, or any one plane as on all, there is a descending and an ascending Arc; spirit, so to speak, involving itself into matter, and matter evolving itself into spirit. The lowest or most material point in the cycle thus becomes the inverted apex of physical intelligence, which is the masked manifestation of spiritual intelligence. Each Round of mankind evolved on the downward Arc (as each race of each Round if we descend to the smaller Mirror of the Cosmos) must thus be more *physically* intelligent than its predecessor, and each in the upward Arc must be invested with a more refined form of mentality, commingled with greater *spiritual* intuitiveness. In the first Round, therefore, we find man a relatively ethereal being compared even on earth with the state he has now attined here, not intellectual but super-spiritual. Like the animal and vegetable shapes around him, he inhabits an immense but loosely organised body. In the second Round he is still gigantic and ethereal, but growing firmer and more condensed in body—a more physical man, but still less intelligent *than* spiritual. In the third Round he has developed a perfectly concrete and compacted body, at first the form rather of a giant ape than of a true man, but with intelligence coming more and more into the ascendant. In the last half of the third Round his gigantic stature decreases, his body improves in texture, and he begins to be a rational man. In the fourth Round, intellect, now fully developed, achieves enormous progress. The direct races with which the Round begins acquire human speech as we understand it. The world teems with the result of Intellectual activity and Spiritual decline. At the half-way point of the fourth Round the *polar point of the whole seven-world period is passed.** From this point outwards the spiritual Ego begins its real struggle with body and mind to manifest its transcendental powers. In the fifth Round the struggle continues, but the transcendental faculties are largely developed, through the struggle between these on the one hand with physical intellect and propensity, which is fiercer than ever, for the intellect of the fifth Round, as well as its spirituality, is an advance on that of the fourth. In the sixth Round humanity attains a degree of perfection both of body and soul, of intellect and spirituality, which ordinary mortals of the present epoch will not readily realise in their imaginations. The most supreme combinations of wisdom, goodness, and transcendental enlightenment which the world has ever seen or thought of, will represent the ordinary type of manhood. Those faculties which now,—in the rare efflorescence of a generation enable some extraordinarily gifted persons † to explore the mysteries of Nature, and gather the knowledge of which some crumbs are now being offered (through these writings and in other ways) to the ordinary world,—will then be the common appanage of all. As to what the seventh Round will be like, the most communicative Occult teachers are solemnly silent. Mankind in the seventh Round will be something altogether too God-like for mankind in the fourth Round to forecast its attributes. (Esoteric Buddhism, 110 and 117).

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* We are told that we are just now half-way through the fifth race of the fourth Round, consequently that we have just passed the polar point in the development of humanity. It is also definitely stated, on the highest Occult authority, that the present *race* of humanity, the present fifth *race* of the fourth Round period, began to evolve about one million of years ago. M. C.

† THE MAHATMAS (Great Souls) are the highest Adepts in Occultism and all Theosophic Wisdom and Science. All over the world there have ever existed Occultists, and Occult fraternities, but the Brotherhood of Tibet, whose head quarters is in the fastnesses of the Himalayan Mountains is, we are told, regarded as incomparably the highest of such associations. The elevation which constitutes a Mahatma "Brother," or "Master," as they are usually styled, is only attained after prolonged and weary probation, and anxious ordeals of terrible severity. The great

As Mr. Sinnett says, the Student of Esoteric Buddhism will have to nerve himself to deal with estimates that have to do with millions of years, and even count such millions by considerable numbers. From the passages we have quoted above we learn that we are now going through the *fifth* race of our present *fourth* Round, consequently that we have only just passed the half-way point, or the polar point of the whole seven rounds.

How much we should rejoice to think that the worst is now over, when we consider that "each Round is specially allotted to the predominance of one of the Seven Principles in Man, in the regular order of their upward gradation." And alas, how plainly we may perceive that the present race of mankind does indeed belong to the Fourth Principle; that of the Kama-Rupa or Animal Soul, the *Will* or *Ego*, which is cognate to Egoism, or Self-love, and consequently to selfishness, all of which is the very opposite of Divine love, or the love of Humanity, when self is lost in the Universal, or the human absorbed in the Divine.

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end and purpose of Adeptship is the attainment of spiritual development. Oriental Esoteric knowledge, which until *now* (when the world is considered ripe for some of it to be divulged) has been most jealously guarded, long antedates the passage through earth-life of Gotama Buddha. It is worthy of note that the Great European Mystic, Swedenborg, speaks of the "*Lost Books of Jehovah*," which, if search were made for them, "would be found in TIBET." M. C.

From this central point of the race-period at which we now are, this Axial, or Turning-point of the world's history, the SPIRITUAL SOUL, or Sixth Principle, begins its real struggle with body and mind, let us say with the Fourth and Fifth Principles, or the Animal WILL and the human MIND or understanding, and will gradually manifest its transcendental powers, for it is destined eventually to transform or develope us from earthly into heavenly Beings, from *being* the Sons of man, or of Earth, to *becoming* the Sons of God, or of Heaven. Is not this truly the Immaculate conception and the birth of the Divine Child in the Manger or Stable, the abode of the Animal nature?

It may be many millions of years before this gestation and Divine birth is accomplished, judging from the time it has taken to develope us into what we now are from our starting-point—whatever that may have been—but we may at least console ourselves with the thought that the worst is over, and that however long our school-days may have to last, they will at least be accomplished under happier circumstances, since the Fifth Round, that of the Fifth Principle, MANAS or *Mind*, the *Understanding of Truth*, is now approaching, when the Spirit of Truth shall guide us into all Truth, in this, the NEW DISPENSATION.

In "Esoteric Buddhism" we behold a most elaborate and scientific explanation of all the phases of existence. In it the most ancient doctrine of Transmigration, combined with the most modern Theory of Evolution is shown to account for all the physical, mental, and moral events and occurrences. The Universe, far from being produced by the *Fiat* of an omnipotent Being, is seen to be the result of eternal growth, decay, and renewal. In how far these ideas, gathered from the records of an "Eternal Religion," which is said to have been preserved through the Ages by the Mahatmas themselves, will be found acceptable to Western Theology we will not attempt to say. The doctrine would appear, however, well-adapted to be met favourably by Modern Science.

In all the Laws of Nature there is manifested infinite Intelligence and mathematical exactitude; and if we will but carefully trace the footsteps of Nature, we shall find that all her operations are carried on in a most thoughtful and loving spirit; yea, the very essence of Thought and Love. The supreme Principle of Existence can only be described to our finite comprehension as an Omnipresent Intelligence, whose Omnipotence is ever directed by Its Infinite Love and Wisdom.

The more we attempt to fathom the Laws of Existence the more shall we find them to be Laws of Absolute Wisdom, Justice and Love.

COMPARISON OF THE SANKHYA PHILOSOPHY WITH ESOTERIC BUDDHISM.

Let us now revert to a Theosophy more ancient than the present system of Buddhism, namely, the system of Kapila known as the Sankhya philosophy:—

"Nature (*Prakriti*), the root (of material forms), is not produced. The Great One (*Mahat-Buddhi* or Intellect) and the rest (which spring from it) are seven (substances), producing and produced. Sixteen are productions (only). Soul is neither producing nor produced.

"From Nature (*Prakriti*) issues the great principle (*Mahat*, intellect), and from this the Ego or Consciousness; from this (consciousness) the whole assemblage of the sixteen principles or entities, and from five of the sixteen the five gross elements.

"The following is a tabular form of the Categories of the Sankhya system:—

"(1) Prakriti or primordial matter, the ὕλη of the Greek philosophy.

"(2) Mahat or Buddhi (intellect).

"(3) Ahankara, the Ego or Consciousness.

"(4) The five subtle elements (Tanmatra).

"(5) The five grosser elements, ether, air, earth, light or fire, and water.

"(6) The five senses.

"(7) The five organs of action.

"(8) The Manas (mind) which is the first of the internal organs, receiving the impressions made upon the senses. It ought to be numbered with *buddhi* and *ahankara*, making with them the three internal organs.

"(9) The soul (*Atman*, *Purusha*), which is totally distinct from Prakriti (Nature), forms, with Nature and its emanations the twenty-five *tattwas* (categories) in the Sankhya philosophy. He who understands them thoroughly has attained to the highest state of man in the present life, and in laying aside the body in death shall know birth no more.

(*See* "*The Sankhya Karika of Iswara Krishna, an Exposition of the System of Kapila*," pp. 17, 54, and 55.)

The similarity of "Esoteric Buddhism" and Sankhya philosophy has induced Western Theosophists to enter into a discussion with the adherents of Esoteric Buddhism, and this controversy is not yet fully concluded. It will, therefore, be interesting to inquire further into a philosophy whose great antiquity and continued persistence show it to be a natural growth of the

Aryan mind; and for this purpose we further make the following short extracts concerning it from Johnson's "Indian Religions":—

"Little is known of Kapila, whose name, a synonym of Fire, hovers, like the names of other founders of Hindu Schools, between mythology and history. The origin of his system cannot be ascribed to any special state.

"The Sankhya is rationalistic. It is careful to define the principles of a true dialectic for the discovery of truth.

"Kapila, *after a Hindu way,* was a Positivist. He did not trouble his mind with seeking a First Cause at all. . . . He did not demand how things came to be here, but what they are, and *to what end* they are here. He took the realities he felt and saw, referred them to certain root principles as primary and substantial, and made these his starting-point. . . These primary substances he found to be two in number and essentially distinct; the one representing the *material* of which the complex experience of actual consciousness is shaped; and the other, its constant and inviolable *beholder,* representing the *ideal Essence* for which it all exists, and by virtue of whose higher presence it becomes of value.

"It has been usual to translate Prakriti by the terms 'nature' and 'matter.' But it certainly does not signify either nature or matter, in the senses now given by us to those terms. Prakriti* means a primary principle, a self-subsistent original essence; and in this sense '*Mula* (the root) *Prakriti*' is taken by Kapila to represent the substratum of all experience, except Purusha, or *Soul,* which is the other, and the *ideal* root-principle *for* which it exists. Prakriti 'is not crude, visible, or divisible matter,' but that 'first principle which was taught in Greece also by Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle,' and which, in fact, 'has no property of body.'—[Wilson's *Kârikâ,* p. 82.] It is all-pervading, immutable, one, without cause or end. It enfolds and evolves senses, without *being* sense as distinct from Spirit. It contains and evolves *mind* also; and this not in a materialistic sense, as a mere outside product of its creative power,—because the great positive principle of Kapila is that, *as there is no production of something*

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* From "pra," *before,* and "kri," *to make* (pro creo), indicative of pre-existence, productive force.

out of nothing, the effect already pre-exists in the cause, and like comes from like only, just as the art of the sculptor can only produce the manifestation of the image that was already [ideally] in the stone. Mind, therefore, *pre-exists in the essence of Prakriti,* which consequently cannot be mere matter as distinct from mind. But Prakriti evolves both senses and mind *only* through the presence and purpose of '*Soul,*' which, again, must not be confounded with mind, as thus evolved in a secondary instrumental and sense-entangled form. . . .

"From this first principle or 'primary root,' this unchanging essence of all things, 'mutable, discreet, mergent in their causes again,' come what Kapila calls the 'seven produced and productive principles.' They are called *vikriti* (from *vi,* differently, and *kri,* to make), indicating that they are not external products made of nothing, but modifications rather of the root itself.

"These are (1) 'Mahat,' the Great One, called also Buddhi, or *understanding,* meaning, doubtless, Mind in its active relations and consequent limitations; whence (2) Ahankâra, self-consciousness or *egoism;* whence (3) five 'subtile rudiments,' which are the grounds of our cognition of sound, touch, smell, form, and taste. And these seven powers potentiate for us, or, as Kapila says, 'produce,' the five organs of sensation, the five organs of action, and the five gross elements, or lowest form of matter, to which is added 'manas,' or *mind,* as the percipient and sensitive element that refers them to a single consciousness. These last are 'products, but unproductive.' And the outward organs of sense are called the *gates* or doors, while the higher internal forces that make these their means of communication—namely, understanding, self-consciousness, and sensibility—are called the *warders.*

"'He who knows these twenty-five principles,' says Kapila, 'is liberated, whatever order of (social) life he may have entered.'

"Among the errors about the nature of Soul which constitute bondage, that of confounding it with matter, or any of the products of Prakriti, is pronounced by all Sânkhyan authorities to be the most radical. 'Soul,' says Kapila, 'is something other than body; since what is combined, and so discerpible, is for the sake of some other that is indiscerpible.' 'Soul is not material, because it is *the experiencer;* and because of its superintendence over nature.'

"Further: the principle of intelligent perceptive power (mahat) is capable of discriminating between Purusha and Prakriti; and in so doing recognises Soul as superior to both 'nature' and itself, in consequence of its being *intelligence* in a higher sense than itself. For Soul, according to Kapila, must not be confounded with mind as such; having a higher form of knowledge, pure, independent, undisturbed vision. 'Soul is the seer, the spectator, the by-stander.' Have we not here a hint of *intuition* in its distinction from *opinion*; of the higher reason in contrast with the limits of the understanding?

"I have said that Kapila, after a Hindu way, was a Positivist. But he certainly was not a Materialist. The Sânkhya has plainly in many respects, a transcendental method and faith.' . . .

"What, then, *is* Soul? . . .

"An *ideal capability* (which) stands fast in us as the real substance of ourselves, untouched by the errors and stains of life, unabated by its discouragements, with serenity beholding them, as it were, in their real outwardness to its own essence."

The word Soul in the above is used to denote the highest principle of all, which *we* call Spirit, so that *our* equivalents for Purusha and Prakriti are not Soul and Substance, but Spirit and Soul, both of which are above and before the astral fluid or Akasa, which is the immediate substance or substratum of nature.

Prakriti is not matter, but the potential essence of matter. Purush and Prakriti may be defined to Western thinkers as God in God's self, and God in creation. As Being and Existence, or as *Subsistence* and *Existence*. In Subsistence God is One, in Existence God is Dual. HE is the Life, and SHE is the Substance. He is the Spirit, She is the Soul, and the Substance of all Souls. In God She is the Divine Wisdom, thus, THEO-SOPHIA. In man She *was* Eve, and She is to become the Immaculate Woman whose seed is to crush the head of the Serpent, or lower principle of materiality.

In concluding this section we may also remind the reader that the Selections from the *Bhagavata Purana*, given in Chapter V., purport to give a popular and practical exposition of that very Sânkhya Theosophy which, in more recondite and abstract terms, is set forth in Kapila's own words in the " Sânkhya Aphorisms of Kapila," published in "Trübner's Oriental Series."

CHINESE THEOSOPHY.

Numerically computed, China comprises nearly a third of the human race, and there Theosophy and the Occult have been, and are, so indigenous that, according to the Sinologist Balfour, it is difficult to convince a cultured Chinaman that the Western faith contains any beauties, or any truths, that are not to be found in the creeds which have already served his countrymen for centuries—we may almost say, for millenniums.

The strictly *Chinese* Theosophic System is principally that of the Tao-Sse; for Buddhism, although counting more adherents, is a foreign importation, and the doctrine of Confucius principally refers to secular affairs. As the already cited competent scholar in his "Excursus to the *Nan-Hua*" observes:

> "There are many striking points of contact between the teachings of the Taoist school and those of the Greek philosophers.
>
> "Like Pythagoras, the Taoist believes that everything comes from One originally; like Parmenides, that only One exists—all things being but modifications or appearances of the same entity. Like Zeno, he cultivates indifference to the pains and pleasures of the world; he exhorts men to live in harmony with Nature; he affirms that concord between the human will and the Universal Reason constitutes the highest form of virtue. Like Plotinos,

the sublime and obscure, he teaches contempt for the allurements of the world; he holds the doctrine of a Trinity, of which the second proceeds from the first, and the third from the other two; like him, too, he practises the mysterious, *Kung-fu*—the process of passing into ecstasy by sitting in a peculiar posture, and inhaling and exhaling the breath in a definite and unusual manner. Nor are the theories common to all sectaries in China without an analogue in Greece. Anaxemenes held no less firmly than Chu-Fu-Tsze that Air is the first principle of Nature; Anaxagoras believed in the primordial division of chaos, when the light particles floated up and formed the sky, and the heavy matter sank and formed the earth; and Xenophanes taught, as clearly as the author of the *Yih-King*, that God is a Sphere."

It would be difficult to decide on the respective merits of Taoism and Buddhism. If the system of the Tao-Sse can be said to be in some respects more practical and direct, that of the Buddhists is more abstruse and scientific; but while Buddha, in his next succeeding incarnation, as Sankaracharya, the Reformer, excluded the laity from Esoteric practice, and regarded a monastic life as an absolute necessity for the attainment to even temporary Samadhi,* the Tao-Sse, according to one of their Divine Classics, the *Nan-Hua* of Chuang-Tse, translated by Mr. F. H. Balfour, F.R.G.S., put the Esoteric practice in a much more practical form, and limited even the time of practice from a lifetime to three years. Here are some practical directions from the *Nan-Hua* itself:—

"Put away all restlessness of will; dispel all errors of the heart; discard all impediments to virtue; pierce through all obstructions to Nature. Riches and honour, distinctions and dignity, celebrity and profit—these six things all unsettle the will. Personal appearance and deportment, lust and reason, passions and thoughts—these six things constitute errors of the heart. Hatred and yearning, joy and anger, sorrow and delight—these six things are all impediments to virtue. Leaving and accepting office, exacting from and conferring upon others, knowledge and ability—these six things are all obstructions to Nature. If the heart be not disturbed by any of these things, then is it perfectly upright; if it be upright, it will be calm; if calm, then pellucid; if pellucid, then empty; if empty, then entirely inactive; in which case there will be nothing which cannot be done.

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* *Cf.* "Khaggavisana Sutta," v. 20, Sir Coomara Swami's version.

"Men who would preserve their bodies and lives complete, should keep themselves in deep seclusion; no retirement is too profound for them.

"Among the junior disciples of Lao Tan was one named Keng-Sang Tsu, who alone had mastered the philosopher's doctrine." . .

He said:—

"Preserve your body (vital force) complete; guard well your life; abjure all anxious thoughts and schemes. If you do this for three years, you will then succeed in attaining to *it*."—(The Divine Absolute State).

In examining the works of Confucius we find that they too have a Theosophic foundation. The "Great Study," the "Tchong Yong" (Abiding in the Centre) are Esoteric books. The Lun-Yu treats in a conversational form subjects similar to those discussed in the *Banquets* of Plato and Xenophon.

The Tao-Sse, or followers of Tao, have the *Tao-Te-King*, and the *Kang-Y-Pien* as their chief text-books. The former treating of Theosophy, the latter of Ethics in connection with Rewards and Punishments, and attempts to systematize the Laws of Fate and Destiny The *Karma* of Buddhism re-appears in idea—in every mystic philosophy.

Lao-Tse said:—

"The bad and good fortune of man are not determined in advance; man brings them on himself by his conduct. The recompense of good and evil follows, as the shadow follows the figure."

This is essentially the doctrine of Karma, or Consequences, of the Buddhists, which so clearly shows that our every act lives in its effects on subsequent life, and is the cause of our present suffering or enjoyment, for the personality of a man at any moment is the result of all his previous acts, thoughts, and emotions, the internal desire is always forging fresh links in the chain of material existence; so true is it that "that which we sow we reap." We are responsible for all our voluntary acts, because we govern our actions by our will, but we can neither foresee nor prevent what we are accustomed to call *accidents*, because these are the consequences of our KARMA, or the result of our previous actions; thus there is an ancient saying among Buddhists that Karma comes from the gods, and is seen in the sevenfold forms of—Heredity, Station of Birth, Length of Life, Opportunities for acquiring Spiritual Knowledge, Disease, Sorrows, and Accidents.

A pre-historical, mathematical Theosophist, in producing the *Yih-King*, left a book that puzzles all Sinologists to no purpose. There are now six different translations extant. Mathematical Theosophy, however, is a subject far too advanced for a merely popular enquiry like the present, so we will content ourselves by giving in this section a few chapters from the Tao-Te-King, a book that should be studied by every Theosophist.

"THE MANIFESTATION OF VIRTUE.

"The Adepts of Antiquity had a mystic communication with the abysses. They were profound and unknown. As they remained unknown, I strive to make them known. Careful were they, like one fording a stream in winter. Cautious were they, like one who dreads his neighbours. Circumspect were they, like a stranger. Vanishing were they, like ice that is about to melt. Simple were they, like unwrought wood. Void were they, like a valley. Dim were they, like turbid water.

"Who can take the turbid water, and by stillness make it clear? Who by continuing the quiescence can gradually make it animated?

"He who keeps to this Tao desires not fulness. And being void he may appear imperfect, and yet not stand in need of new perfection."

"ARRIVING AT THE SOURCE.

"Having once arrived at a state of absolute void, it is possible to maintain a perfect quiescence. All beings emanate and return to their origin. When beings have developed, each returns to its source. To have returned to the source is to rest. To rest is to accomplish destiny. To accomplish destiny is to be eternal. To know the Eternal is to be illuminated. Not to know the Eternal causes immorality and misery. He who knows the Eternal is catholic; being catholic, he is just; being just, he is a king; being a king, he is Divine; being Divine, he is Tao; being Tao, he is enduring, he loses his body without danger."

"THE ABYSS.

"There is a Being Ineffable! Perfect!—existing before Heaven and Earth. Quiescent! Inconceivable! It alone continues unchanged! It may be regarded as the Mother of the World. I know not its name; but designate it by 'Tao.' Desirous to describe it, I say it is *great;* being great, I say it is *fugitive;* being fugitive, I say it is *remote;* being remote, I say it is *returning*. For Tao is great; Heaven is great; Earth is great; the *King* is also great. In the world there are three kinds of greatness, and the *King* has one of them. Man's Law is from the Earth. The Earth's Law is from Heaven. Heaven's Law is from Tao. And Tao is its own Law."

> "FAR-SEEING.
>
> "One needs not go beyond his own door to know the world. One needs not to peep through the window to see the Divine Tao. The further one goes away from one's self, the less one knows.
>
> "Therefore the wise man knows without travelling, names without looking, and accomplishes his object without action."

Whether the conclusion arrived at by Mr. F. H. Balfour is justified, that Taoism is "one of the most degenerate systems of belief in the entire world," and whether this compliment could not be returned by a Tao-Sse when speaking of some of our Western orthodoxies, it is not our intention here to consider. We only see in Taoism a system of Theosophy adapted to the Chinese mind; and assuredly Lao-Tse, as his words testify, knew the Divine.

It may not be out of place to reproduce here a conversation concerning Confucius, recorded by the Chinese Historian, Sse-ma-tsian, where it is shown that Confucius had evidently at that time not completed his Initiation. In the "Nan-Hua" Chuang-Tse says:—

> "Confucius lived to be sixty years old, and at sixty years of age his convictions changed. What he had first regarded as truth he subsequently came to look upon as error. Yet I do not know that what he now looks upon as truth he did not regard as error fifty-nine years!
>
> "Huei Tse replied, 'The intellect of Confucius was laborious, and his knowledge most extensive.'
>
> "'These things,' rejoined Chuang Tse, 'Confucius discarded, (and embraced the True Doctrine); but he never acknowledged having done so,'" &c.

Confucius may subsequently have attained to the True Tao, as his works contain Esoteric doctrines taught only by advanced Initiates. The following dialogue will serve to illustrate the essential difference between the two greatest Chinese Theosophers :*

"Confucius, having lived to the age of fifty-one years without hearing of the True Way (Tao), went to a place called P'ei to see Lao Tan; who said: 'Ah, you come? I hear that you rank as a sage up north yonder. Have you attained to the True Way (Tao)?' 'I have not attained to it,' replied Confucius. 'How did you set about in order to attain to it?' asked Lao Tan. 'I sought it in rules and regulations,' said Confucius; 'but five years passed without my getting it.' 'And what means did you use next?' asked Lao Tan. 'I sought for it in Yin and Yang' (the Passive and Active), replied Confucius; 'but twelve years passed and I attained it not.'

"'Yea,' rejoined Lao Tan, 'if it were a way (Tao) that could be trodden, no man would tread thereon before his prince? If it were a road (Tao) to be walked, would not a man journey thereon with his kin? If it were a doctrine (Tao) whereby to instruct others, would not a man instruct his brothers? If it were a rule (Tao) to be given to others, would not a man transmit it to his sons and grandsons? But he who knows it not has it not. Internally it has no principle and is not fixed, externally it has no rule, and yet passes not away. He who comes forth from the internal to the external receives not the external. The Holy Man does not come forth. He who enters from the external has no fixed rule for the internal. If the Holy Man remains not concealed, he is praised as a useful tool; more he cannot attain.'

"'Benevolence and rectitude were externals of the kings who are gone. They could rest peacefully in one place, but dwell not therein for long. They had adversaries and were much abused. The perfect men of old through Tao arrived at benevolence, and elected to abide in Justice. In their rambles through the land they depended for their sustenance on the produce of the fields or gardens with perfect indifference. The ancients called these "rambles of faith," and they resulted in the acquirement of Divinity. To the rich who acted thus, their wealth was no hindrance; to the illustrious who acted thus, their fame was not diminished:—He who loves authority must not resign his power to others. If he is firm, he will be feared; if he looses his grasp he will be pitied, and the Whole has no mirror to behold itself. He who does not spare will be the executioner for the people. Anger and Kindness, Receiving and Giving, Reproof and Instruction, Life and Death—these eight things are the instruments of the Perfect. Only he who has accomplished the Great Change, without perishing, is able to use them. Wherefore it is said: "the rectified rectify." He whose heart is not thus created, heaven's door is closed upon him.'

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* *Cf.* the translation of kiuan 5 of the Nan-Hua, in the Appendix to Strauss' Lao-Tse's Tao-Te-King, with the Nan-Hua translated by F. H. Balfour, p. 178 *sqq.* The wording is slightly altered to render its meaning more apparent.

"Confucius, seeing Lao Tan, spoke to him also of benevolence and rectitude. Lao Tan said: 'Winnowing chaff blinds the eyes, and the position of Heaven and Earth, and the four quarters of the world seem changed. The sting of mosquitos and gadflies will prevent a man from sleeping a whole night through. When benevolence and rectitude thus torment us, they irritate the mind and are revolting distortions. Cause rather that the world may not lose its natural simplicity, and you will establish a morality that shall continue, and introduce a virtue that shall remain. What wisdom is there in beating a huge drum to delude children? The snow goose does not bathe every day, and yet it is white; the crow does not blacken itself every day, and yet it is black. These are natural qualities easily discerned, but mere external reputation and praise are not true greatness. When the fountain is dried up then the fishes that are left on dry ground exude a moisture; but they would do better to forget themselves in rivers and lakes.'

"Confucius, returning from the interview with Lao Tan, spoke not for three days. Thereupon his disciples asked him, saying: 'Master, as you have seen Lao Tan, how would you describe him?'

"'On that day,' replied Confucius, 'I verily saw the Dragon! The Dragon coiled and was wholly compact, he uncoiled and was wholly extended, he ascended with the clouds and winds feeding upon Yin and Yang. My mouth stood wide open and I could hardly breathe. How am I further to describe Lao Tan?'"

CHAPTER VII.

PAGAN THEOSOPHY.

THEOSOPHY, "the Great or Supreme Knowledge," the Eternal Religion, can be divided into three great classes: Heathen, Semitic, and Christian. Other Heathen Systems having already been discussed in the Chapters on Hermetic and Oriental Theosophy, the System we now intend to investigate as the Pagan or Heathen *par excellence*, having all the leading traits of Heathenism, is the Theosophy of the Greeks and Romans.

We hope our Christian Readers will permit us to affirm the existence of a "Heathen" Theosophy, while on the other hand we intend no slight to our Heathen friends when we assert that there is a *Christian* Theosophy, quite as true, exact, profound, and sublime as any Heathen System; and as Theosophists, or Students of the Esoteric Science, we are as much devoted to the Doctrine of Buddha and of all Buddhas as to the Law of Christ.

These Divine Masters are all One in Doctrine. Our Theosophy, therefore, is as much Buddhistic as it is Christian; we accept the Esoteric part of all Systems, rejecting only the shells of Exoterism that, by ages of mental and spiritual stagnation, have encrusted Divine Truth with human errors.

If we were to point out any leading trait in each of the three great classes wherein we have divided Theosophy, we would say, that as Divine Love is the animus of all Theosophy or Divine Wisdom, Heathen Theosophy is Love without Fear; Semitic Theosophy expresses more Fear than Love; while Christian Theosophy alone observes a judicious mean that is full of Divine Love and Awe.

The great Characteristic of the Heathen Initiate who has arrived at true Soul-Science, is Fearlessness; of the Semit-Awe; illustrated by the fact, that the very Name of God is kept a profound and incommunicable secret. The Esoteric Christian only follows that path of safety, or *Perfect Way*, that enables him to live in the world without being lost in it; and to practise the virtues of the ascetic as a practical saint, without having to retire into the deserts where he would be of no use to his fellow-men.

Judging by the fragments that have descended to us of the Religious Writings of the Syrians, Phœnicians, Carthaginians, Assyrians, and Chaldeans, these people, although linguistically related to the Semits, were Heathens in Theosophy. Their Religious Ideas were abhorred by the Hebrews, while the latter were an object of ridicule among the surrounding nations, with whose views they so widely differed.

The supposition is almost justified, that in the Hebrews, and possibly also the Persians, we behold tribes of ancient Atlantis, who preserved the tradition of Monotheism and Soul-Worship in greater purity than the surrounding nations. Although, had not Moses and the Prophets guided the Hebrews, as Zarathustra and the Magi guided the Persians, both the Hebrews and the Persians would have lost their ancient Divine Tradition or Kabbala, and would have fallen to the Worship of Spirits.

Despite its Dualism, the Persian could also be considered a Semitic System, as it expresses more Awe than Love of God. The evil principle, Ahriman, was abhorred, not worshipped; so the System of the Magi was practically one of Monotheism, like Judaism.

The System of the Semitic Theosophists, or Kabbalists, is one of pure Soul-Worship to the exclusion of spirit-communion. They worship the "One" without a mediator, and reject the phenomenal as unworthy of comparison with the Divine Being. They regard God as ineffable, and assert that He can only be known by his manifestations.

The Monotheism of the ancient Hebrews, while surrounded by polytheistic nations, of Soul-Worship continuing in the midst of Demon-Worship, could be accounted for by the supposition that the Hebrews are a tribe descended of a remnant of the Atlantian people; and the terror of the catastrophe that destroyed their continent may have impressed itself on their minds so hereditarily, that their conceptions of God were more inclined to Fear than Love. It may also have been such an event as to appear like a Divine Judgment, that caused the minds of the ancient Persians to revolt from Hinduism, making Devils of the Hindu gods, and gods of those whom the Hindus, by their Spirit-Guides, were taught to regard as Devils.

The Phœnicians, although Semites, were Heathens in Religion ; while the Heathen Persians were, by their teachers, guided to a Semitic Monotheism. There may have been an interchange of ideas between the Magi and the Schools of the Prophets, which would account for the two Systems being so similar yet so unlike each other. Each System preserving its natural genius yet being almost a counterpart of the other.

The Religious Philosophy of Greece and Rome, like that of most civilised Pagan nations of Antiquity, was a System of Spiritualism blended with Theosophy. Hellas and Rome, also, had a Theosophy without a popular Sacred Book or Bible. It was left to the isolated Seers, Poets, and Philosophers, the Sybils, and others, to theosophise on their own account, and embellish the current Myths with Occult Esoterism. When the Esoteric System of the Pagan Hierarchy was interpreted by the Neo-Platonists, Paganism itself was already dying ; and the doors of the Sanctuary, so long jealously guarded, were only thrown open as the Temple was already crumbling into the dust. The light of Paganism, that in ancient times had illuminated so vast a portion of cultured humanity, flickered and expired. Not totally, it is true, for a great part survived in Christianity, and is still more renascent in Modern Thought; and it would no doubt surprise many how their *new* ideas could be proved to be of very ancient origin.

The Mythos, a Legacy which was left by Paganism to successive ages, is an incomprehensible puzzle to the moderns, which neither historical nor astronomical interpretation has as yet satisfactorily explained. The attempts of modern scholars to interpret it by Astronomy give but a slight outline of a part of the Occult Science veiled in Mythology. We do not contradict the astronomical interpretation, but only dispute its finality, and deny that the Secret of Mythology was *only* astronomy. The problem in question can surely be narrowed to this one point—which of the two worlds represents the other? Undoubtedly moral truth was the first, and is therefore the one symbolised. The symbol came after the reality, which is quite natural.

The parallel of Dupuis is no doubt correct in its general outline, for this outline presents to us the struggle between good and evil. Evil is the privation of God's presence, as Good is that presence. The type between the Sun and the spiritual nature has ever served as the type of relation between man and God. The departure of the Sun brings cold and darkness, or the empire of Ahrimanes to man, and thus is it a correct emblem of evil. Man in approaching God is at the same time warmed and enlightened at the source of all light and heat, and the moment he removes from it, coldness and death take possession of him. Thus, the passing of the Sun into our hemisphere, and its subsequent retiring from it, may very well represent the feelings and the actions of men with respect to the Deity, and it was no doubt this Sun, the Sun of

Righteousness, and not the material Sun, that received the adoration of men in bygone days.

To prove the reality of the Occult secrets concealed in Mythology it may suffice to mention that with as much ingenuity as Dupuis, Volney, Higgins, Gerald Massey and others interpret Mythology astronomically, have Occult students of past centuries, as Kircher, Weigel, Pernety, and many others, explained the Mythos alchemically, and shown that the key to the Scriptures is to be found in the alchemic secret of transmutation; GOLD being the alchemic formula for GOD, or Spirit. Although those interpretations have together with the entire science of Alchemy fallen of late into oblivion, there is no evidence that the ideas of modern scholars will be better remembered by posterity than the theories of the past are remembered by the present age.

The ancient Initiates by Gnosis made knowable the unknown. Attaining to that true spirituality which Hermes in the Smaragdine Table calls "the glory of the entire world that dissipates darkness," they arrived at an exalted standpoint whereon the Laws of Nature were revealed to them. Spiritual Science being the Sanctuary of the Physical Sciences, the communication of the latter would even have been considered in ancient times a violation of the Divine Mysteries, and had it not been for this fear of violating the Mysteries, Physical Sciences would doubtless have been more commonly known and mankind would by this time have attained to a far higher grade of culture.

For instance, recent discoveries have induced the statement that "Electricity is the right hand of God." Yet this was evidently known to the ancients when they placed the lightning in the right hands of Jupiter.

> "Thou holdest at Thy service, in Thy mighty hands,
> "The two-edged flaming, immortal thunderbolt."
> (*Kleanthes' Hymn to the Supreme God.*)

"Canst thou send lightnings that they may go, and say unto thee, Here we are?" (Job xxxviii. 35.)

Not only were the ancients acquainted with the existence of Electricity, but they were also perfectly aware that it was identical in its source and essence with Magnetism, although diverse in its conditions of exercise. Both Hermes and Pythagoras taught this; Synesios found it among the souvenirs of the School of Alexandria, and sang it in his hymns—listen to this:—

> "One single source, one single root of light
> Flashes and spreads out into two branches of splendour;
> One breath circles around the earth
> And vivifies, under innumerable forms,
> All parts of *animated* Nature."

The pillars of Hercules represented the myth of the Electric Principle; or the dual power of Electricity and Magnetism on which may be supposed to rest a world. The Colossus of Rhodes, a monolith in the human form, bore the same signification. His feet resting on opposite rocks representing these eternally equilibrated forces of the Universe, bearing aloft the lighted torch of intelligence in his right hand, and holding in his left the arrow of action and movement. The ancient thinkers were indeed as giants on the earth.

Electricity is but one of the latent forces of Nature, and who can tell how many more there may be unknown to us that were well known to Ancient Spiritual Scientists? Only those who pursue the same Spiritual Method of the Ancients can trace the knowledge concealed in their Occult Allegories.

How much they excelled the moderns in Spiritual intelligence is manifest in this, that they knew to what things in heaven many things in this world corresponded, and hence what they signified. That the Ancient Initiates possessed the knowledge of such things is evident—take for example this instance; they described the origin of Intelligence by a winged horse, whom they called Pegasus, and his breaking open with his hoof a fountain, at which were nine Virgins, and this upon a hill: for they knew that by a horse was signified the Intellectual Principle, which, as the horse, will swiftly bear its rider over every obstacle to the understanding of truths; by his Wings the Spiritual Principle, which as wings will bear him upwards; by hoofs truths in the lowest degree, they being the basis of intelligence; by Virgins the Sciences; by hill Elevation, and in the Spiritual Sense Charity.

In the "Six Books of Proclos on the Theology of Plato," many important subjects of the Spiritual Science of the Ancients are treated, or rather suggestively hinted at. The so-called "Chaldean Oracles" given in

"The Platonist," and the "Sentences" selected from the "Elements of Theology of Plato," appearing in the same, will enable the Reader to become acquainted with the Essence of Heathen Theosophy of the Neo-Platonic, or rather, Neo-Hermetic school, that for centuries combated with Christian Theosophy for the Religious and Philosophic Dominion of the Western World. Theosophy, we repeat, is the key to Mythology. The books of Plato, Proclos, Plotinos, Porphyry, reveal the method of the pagan Hermetic Theosophy. The Platonists were too late with their revelation of the ancient Mysteries of Paganism, for Christianity was already in the field; but theirs, nevertheless, was the true hierarchic method, although it could not become popular with the masses, for it presented itself under a philosophical aspect which only educated persons could understand.

Paganism was a very exclusive system, offering nothing but Spiritualism to all except the very highest Initiates, who regarded a Monotheistic Theosophy as their Great Arcanum. When there came two Jews, Jesus and Paul, possessing a Knowledge of God, and offering the Secret of the Sanctuary to all, "The people who sat in darkness saw a great light." Slaves knew more than their masters, and the much-prized Initiations to the Mysteries were rejected. The Eleusinian and the Bacchic Mysteries were theatrical representations of the process and course of individual Re-birth. Very few of the so-called Initiates, who witnessed them, discerned their true esoteric meaning, through the conglomeration of material and spiritual paraphernalia. Then, as now, the mere knowledge of Spirit-existence was quite as much as the ordinary mind could grasp. Initiation to these, the lesser Mysteries, was probably, in the end, equal to attending a modern *séance*, and Initiates who had passed through the prescribed elaborate Ritual, when they really *saw* spirits at the so-called Autopsia, with their minds duly worked up to the pitch of awe, would not demand higher knowledge. Thus the institution of the Mysteries was intended in all probability to guard a Spiritualistic rather than a Theosophic Secret. It is evident that the greatest and wisest men of antiquity could not have been taken up for ages with mere theatrical mystification. Something was at the back of those Mysteries or they would not have existed so long; and although it was not Theosophy, it was the next best thing—namely, the knowledge of Spirit-existence.

To become an Initiate was really the criterion of the worse and the better man. The man of the crowd, if he happened to be initiated, was satisfied, and sought not for more knowledge than that there were,—

"Aerial spirits, by great Jove designed,
To be on earth the guardians of mankind;
Invisible to mortal eyes they go,
And mark our actions, good or bad, below.
The immortal spies with watchful care preside,
And thrice ten thousand, round their charges glide.
They can reward with glory or with gold;
A power they by Divine permission hold."—*Hesiod.*

This knowledge of Spirit-existence, a life beyond the grave, was found sufficient to ensure the acquiescence of the Heathen Initiate to the national cultus. The popular morality may not have come up to the ideal standard aspired to by Philosophers, or Lovers of the Wisdom-Religion, who often had to teach in opposition to the Hierarchs, as was the case with Socrates; yet the Initiate of Antiquity was thus much better informed than the modern materialists, as he knew those very facts which they ignore. Thus the Lesser Mysteries were no doubt instituted for the purpose of inculcating the truth of Spirit-existence; but the Greater Mysteries had a far deeper Theosophic merit, namely, that of imparting a knowledge of the Divine, and for those who were desirous of receiving a higher Initiation there was extant, until the decadence of Paganism, a most stupendous Hierarchic System.

Nearly all ancient Philosophers were not only Initiates but also Esoterists, teaching Theosophy under the veil of Allegory. They were all Spiritual teachers, and their Philosophy was Theosophy. Material terms were only used as symbols for Spiritual things.

It would be difficult to give a selection from the philosophic writings of antiquity to illustrate the Pagan ideas on Theosophy, on account of the variety and the multitude of the writings, and the peculiar, and to us unfamiliar, modes of expression, which nearly always demand an elucidation of greater length than the text itself. Still, we will endeavour to exhibit a few specimens, mere bricks as it were, from the Pagan Temple, and let Orpheus, Hesiod, Xenophanes, Empedocles, Kleanthes, and Synesios, each say a few words. To arrive at a true appreciation of Pagan Theosophy, the works of ancient Philosophers should be studied, in the original language if possible, or at least in a good translation, from several of the best of which we have culled ours. Modernised summaries, compendiums, and histories of philosophy are generally misleading, and should be avoided. The words of Pythagoras, Plato, Aristotle, Proclos, Plotinos, Jamblicos, and, in brief, those of all ancient Initiates, should be as familiar to the Theosophist as the Gospel is to the Christian.

ORPHEUS.

"Zeus the first generated Zeus the last, the ruler of thunder;
Zeus the head and the middle, from Zeus all are generated.
Zeus generates as man, and is also an immortal maid;
Zeus is the root of the Earth and of the star-strewn heavens.
Zeus is King of all things, originating beginning.
Metis first mother, and many-joyed Eros.
One power, one creative Spirit is the great ruler of all;
One royal body encompasses all things,
Fire and Water, Earth, Ether, Night and Day,
These rest united in the great body of Zeus."

HESIOD.

"To Jove alone, to his great will we owe
That we exist, and what we are below
Whether we blaze among the sons of fame,
Or live obscurely and without a name,
Or noble or ignoble still we prove
Our lot determined by the will of Jove.
With ease he lifts the peasant to a crown,
With the same ease he casts the monarch down;
With ease he clouds the brightest name in night,
And calls the meanest to the fairest light.

At will he varies life through every state,
Unnerves the strong, and makes the crooked straight.
Such Jove, who thunders terrible from high,
Who dwells in mansions far above the sky."

XENOPHANES.

"One God rules, He is supreme among Gods and men;
Neither in body like unto mortals, nor in spirit.
As Being He is wholly seeing, knowing, and feeling.
Easily ruling the All by Thought alone;
Distinct from mankind, as perfectly rounded,
Untouched, rational, yea, wholly pure reason,
Much is there subject to the One.
The All is Reason and Thought,
But this One for certain none will espy,
Nor shall one espy what I teach of the Gods and the All.
For though he should attain to the whole in completion,
Yet not perceiving the All, he only acquires opinions.
I too required the one pointed thought* again to return,
For lost in delusion I erred many years,
And became weary of searching and seeking.
For wherever my mind turned, there I found
The All resolving itself in the One; as Being for ever,
And everywhere, is drawn to its similar nature.

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* "The one pointed thought" here alluded to, so well known in Hindu Theosophies, is the head-stone of the corner of every true Mystic Philosophy. "This concentration of thought, ekâgratâ or one-pointedness, as the Hindus called it, is something to us almost unknown. Our minds are like kaleidoscopes of thought in constant motion; and to shut our mental eyes to everything else, while dwelling on one thought only, has become to most of us almost as impossible as to apprehend one musical note without harmonics. With the life we are leading now, with telegrams, letters, newspapers, reviews, pamphlets and books ever breaking in upon us, it has become impossible, or almost impossible, ever to arrive at that intensity of thought which the Hindus meant by ekâgratâ, and the attainment of which was to them the indispensable condition of all philosophical and religious speculations."—(*Max Müller, Preface to the Sacred Books of the East.*)

But mortals imagine Gods like unto themselves,
Having garments, voices, and bodies as we have.
If bulls and lions had hands to design and form
Like men, then horses of horses, and bulls of bulls,
Would for themselves make ideal gods of their own;
And like their own bodies would be
The corporeal form of their idols."—(*On God and the All.*)

EMPEDOCLES.

"For God has not bodily limbs nor corporeal form,
But is purely Divine thought, ineffable and One,
Penetrating All with ease at a glance.
Happy is he who possesses the fulness of Divine mind.
Unhappy those who have attained to nought but the clouds of opinion.
It is impossible bodily to approach unto God.
Our eyes cannot see, nor our hands feel Him,
Those senses whereby come all other convictions
Unto the knowledge of mankind."—(*On Physical Nature.*)
"Friends, townsmen, living in the towers,
At the banks of the golden Agragas,
Lovers of justice and right, ye hospitable worthy men,
To whom evil is unknown, ye I salute.
An immortal God, no more a mortal man, I come
Honoured by all, and now openly manifested;
With wreaths and ribbons my brow is entwined.
When thus I appeared in cities to be initiated,
Men and women as with one voice called me blessed;
Thousands demand of me how to attain lasting salvation:
Some seeking divination, others to be healed from disease."
(*On Purification.*)

KLEANTHES, THE STOIC'S, HYMN TO THE SUPREME GOD.

"Greatest of the Gods—God with many names, God ever ruling and ruling all,
Zeus, origin of Nature, governing the Universe by law,
All Hail! For it is right for mortals to address Thee,
Since we are Thy offspring, and we alone of all
That live and creep on earth have the power of imitative speech,
Therefore will I praise Thee and hymn for ever Thy power.

The wide heavens, which surround the earth, obey Thee,
Follow where Thou wilt, and willingly obey Thy law.
Thou holdest at Thy service, in Thy mighty hands,
The two-edged flaming immortal thunderbolt,
Before whose flash all Nature trembles.
Thou only rulest as supreme Thought,
And appearest mingled in all things great or small,
Which by filling the All is king of the All.
Nor without Thee, O Deity, does anything happen in the world,
Neither at the Celestial pole, nor in the great Ocean,
Except only evil, preferred by the senseless wicked.
But Thou also art able to bring to order that which is chaotic,
Giving form to the formless, and friendship to the unfriendly,
So reducing all variety to unity,
And even making good out of evil.
Thus throughout Nature is one eternal law,
From which only the wicked seek to escape.
Poor fools ! who long for Good and its happiness,
But will neither see nor hear the universal Divine Law,
Which, obeyed with wisdom, gives birth to a noble life.
They set other aims before them than Divine beauty :
Some pursuing fame, in unhappy struggles,
Whilst others course unwearied through the world for gain,
Others again, devoted to indolence and sensual pleasures,
Experience the nothingness of these in their own being.
But Thou, O Zeus! all-giver, in clouds surrounded,
Ruler of thunder! guard men from sad error!
Father! scatter the clouds of the soul, that we may follow
The Law, whereby Thou rulest the All with justice for ever.
That we may be worthy of Thy honour, let us honour Thee again,
Praising Thy works, as it is becoming for mortals.
For nothing is better for gods or men
Than to praise the Supreme Law common to all."

SYNESIOS.

"All-Father Thou
Father, Self-Creator,
Before and without Father,
Thou art Thine own Son.
One, anterior to Thyself,
Being of Beings
All-Centre.
Pre-mental mind,
Cosmic Root,
All radiant light

Of the first creation,
Truth of Reason,
Source of Wisdom,
Mind occult
In thine own splendour,
Eye of Thyself,
Surpassing the mind.
Mind of many,
Generator of mind,
Origin of the Gods,
Creator of spirits,
Nourisher of souls,
Source of Sources,
Beginning of Beginnings,
Root of Roots.
Unity of Unities,
Number of Numbers,
Knowledge and knowing
And that which is known,
And anterior to the known.
One and All,
One of the All,
One anterior to the All,
Life-essence of the All.
Depth and height,
Thought-force,
Man and Spouse,
These things we learn
From the occult mind
Circling unnameable abysses.—
Thou art the creative cause
And also the created being.
The Illuminating
And Illuminated,
Thou art hidden
In Thy own splendour.
One and All,
One in thy Self
And through the all.
Thou art the Root
Of the present, the past,
The future, and of what now is.
Father art Thou and Mother,
Man art Thou and Spouse.
Speech art Thou and silence,
Nature, and origin of Nature,
Ruler, and Æon of Æons.
Thou art supreme Justice.
Greatest praise to Thee,
The Creator of Worlds.
Greatest praise to Thee,
Thou Centre of All.
Unity of divine numbers,
Anterior to all powers.
Unity of Unities,
Father of Fathers,
Beginning of Beginnings,
Source of Sources,
Root of Roots,
Good of the Good,
Divineness of the Divine,
World of the Worlds,
Idea of Ideas,
Ineffable Beauty,
Occult Life-seed,
Father of Æons,
Father of innumerable
Intelligible worlds,
Whence ambrosial
Spirit descends,
Dissolving the body's burden,
And a second world
Again arises.
Blessed One,
I praise Thee with my song.
I also praise Thee, Blessed One,
With my silence;
For Thou knowest
Wholly the intention
Of voice and of silence.

Thee I sing, O Son!
First born, First Light,
Son most glorious
Of the Supreme Father,
Blessed One!
With the great Father
I praise Thee.
For from Thee
And from Thy Father's
Fruitful Will
Combined in the Beginning
With the Divine Spirit,
Centre of the Father,
Centre of the Son,
Came the Mother,
Even the Sister,
Even the Daughter,
Bringing forth
The Occult Root;—
That the Son in the Father
May be outpoured.
The outpouring itself
Has found seed
And stands now
In the midst of God,
A God.
For by the Son
And by the Eternal Father's
Blessed outpouring,
The Son has received form,
Unity and Trinity;
Unity abiding for ever,
And the Trinity Thou,
Father unknowable,
Father unnameable,
Unknowable to Mind,
Unnameable by word.
Thou art the Mind of Mind,
The Soul of Soul,
The Nature of Nature.
Let me flee from
The demon of matter,
The power of lust;—
But give me, Lord!
The comforting Friend,
The companion and Guide,
The holy angel,
The holy strength,
That also in this life,
In the terrestrial,
By praise of Thee
May be increased
The Soul's courage.
That also hereafter,
When freed of
Terrestrial fate and bonds,
I may go to Thy dwelling,
Unto Thy bosom,
From the source
Whence the Soul
Has outpoured.
Reach me Thy hand,
Call me, O Blessed One,
Guide the beseeching
Soul out of matter."

It is here that we see the spirit of Paganism assuming Christian Symbols, but hardly in the Christian sense now accepted as orthodox.

These hymns are full of Fearless Love, such as no Semit could or would have written, for the essential difference between the Heathen, the Semit, and the Christian, is, as we have already defined: that the Heathen loves without Fear; the Semit fears without Love; and the Christian is full of Love and Awe. The Heathens had formulated a System which enunciated the idea, that everything that is, is holy.

The Greeks saw and worshipped nothing higher than this life itself, few had any hold on, or hope of the next, and the Apostle Paul, who was "dying daily" to the outward life, whilst the inner grew and lived with more vitality every day, writes to them in astonishment: "How say some among you there is no resurrection of the dead?" Their religion had degenerated into the arts, the love and the worship of the beautiful; but they were unsatisfied, for there is an insatiable desire above all external forms and objects in man which these can never satisfy, and so they asked from time to time for some new thing: "Who will show us any good?" Much as they loved the outward and the visible, they could not rest in it, for immortal man cannot feed his hunger upon husks. The illimitable "Unknown God" remained; to whom an altar stood in Athens. But they had no sacred books, and no prophets. Instead of prophets, however, they had such teachers as Socrates and Plato, in whom the immortal life throbbed with most glorious vitality; and yet, when Paul came and preached at Athens the resurrection of the dead, so little were they prepared for it, that "they mocked!"

We read that the Parthenon standing on the summit of Athens, built of white marble and surrounded by columns, was perhaps the most perfect building ever raised by man. Every part of its exterior was adorned with Phidian Sculpture; and within stood the statue of Pallas Athênê herself, in ivory and gold, by the same master hand. Another statue of colossal dimensions of the great Goddess stood on the summit of the Acropolis, and her golden helmet and shield flashing in the sun could be seen far out at sea. In her form and face purity was confirmed by wisdom. Tranquil serenity, serious purpose, and clear-sighted intellect, were the characteristics of the stately Goddess, whose name, "Athênê," was said to be derived from an old Etruscan word signifying mental action—and that of Pallas, from having with her sword and spear (*i.e.*, the brightness of her intellect) conquered a celebrated Giant, whose image at Troy represented the Myth of Knowledge of the Fiery Soul (*i.e.*, the lower or Animal Soul). It was to the credit of the Athenians that they chose her as the guardian of their city; for how evidently did she represent that Divine Virgin Wisdom, whom "The Lord possessed in the beginning, before His works of old," and who "was set up from everlasting." (Proverbs viii.) The Divine Wisdom from above, figured by the virgin goddess Minerva, who had issued from the *Brain* of Jove. She who was destined eventually to be so sweetly represented and typified by the Virgin Mother of the Divine Humanity; herself a type of the Divine Soul *in* man, which alone can conceive by the Holy Spirit, and bring forth the perfect man.

"Still more wonderful," says Freeman Clarke, "was the Phidian Jupiter at Olympia, whose majesty was such that it was an event in life to have seen it, and not to have seen it before death one of the greatest of calamities." Thus, if Pallas Athênê may be taken as a representation of the Divine *Soul*, or Virgin Mother, this Olympian Jupiter may be said to represent the Divine *Spirit* or Father of Humanity. How evidently these Greek sculptors in creating these wonderful ideals were feeling after God; and for God incarnate in man. They were prophets of the future development of humanity, and strove to show how man is a partaker of the Divine Nature.

The causes producing the dissolution of Paganism have been well discerned by Professor Draper in his classic "History of the Intellectual Development of Europe," from which we give the following quotation:—

> "The fact that Polytheism furnished a religious explanation for every natural event made it essentially antagonistic to science.
>
> "While some of the philosophers received in silence the popular legends, as was the case with Socrates, or, like Plato, regarded it as a patriotic duty to accept the public faith, others, like Xenophanes, denounced the whole as an ancient blunder, converted by time into a national imposture.
>
> "As it was with philosophers, so it was with historians; the rise of true history brought the same result as the rise of true philosophy. The feigned facts of Grecian fore-time were altogether outdone in antiquity and wonder by the actual history of Egypt.
>
> "Thus for many ages stood affairs. One after another, historians, philosophers, critics, poets, had given up the national faith, and lived under a pressure perpetually laid upon them by the public; adopting generally, as their most convenient course, an outward compliance with the religious requirements of the state.

> "It is altogether erroneous to suppose that Polytheism maintained its ground as a living force until the period of Constantine and Julian. Its downward fall commenced at the time of the opening of the Egyptian ports. Nearly a thousand years were required for a consummation. The change first occurred among the higher classes, and made its way slowly through the middle ranks of society. . . Long, therefore, previous to the triumph of Christianity, Paganism must be considered as having been irretrievably ruined. . . There was a slow and, it must be emphatically added, a spontaneous decline."

The Heathen Temple was, without doubt, inaugurated by Initiates of a high order; but when the Theosophic Secret, the Great Arcanum, the Word, or Logos—the God within, was lost, and nothing remained but tradition on the one side, and Dæmons crowding to be worshipped in order to vampirize their worshippers, on the other, the System of God for the few and the Dæmons for the many ultimately ended in no God being believed in. When doubt, begotten by ignorance, sapped the foundations of the edifice, no matter how subtle the System thought out by and for the few, it fell; it had to fall, for there was no one to support it.

The Church of God is in the heart of man; but when God was studiously kept estranged from his Sanctuary, and Dæmons there enshrined, and vampires deified, the science of the few was insufficient to keep them safely on the rock of their knowledge, and they became submerged, surrounded by a sea of error and ignorance. The old lights became extinct, and new beacons were found. Lights that verily were a salvation to those who, until then, were perishing in the nights and oceans of spirit-darkness.

The compact that the ancient Heathen Hierarchs made with earth-bound spirits (Dæmons), whom they deified in order to get their manifestations, was, no doubt considered to be a cheap and good bargain; but, as one cannot touch pitch without being defiled, these could not exist without being inimical to man's eternal welfare, being in antagonism to the Divine. When the conditions were no longer offered, there were no more phenomena. The gods became angry and vanished. Polytheism, that arrangement whereon the Hierarchies no doubt so congratulated themselves, served to become the chief disintegrating cause of decay of Paganism. For Polytheism was simply the worship of earth-bound spirits.

Semitic, and unfortunately but too often so-called Christian Orthodoxy, bars the way to Natural Science, and forbids all inquiry concerning the origin of things. This is because it holds strictly to the *letter* of the Sacred writings (*the letter which killeth*), and has lost the key to the inner or Esoteric meaning. But Heathen Orthodoxy was far worse. There everything was deified; the Greek worship was intensely human, and all that was human had its sanction in the example of some God. They had yet to learn that not all that is human is Divine. Man's mind was in a cosmic prison; every bar was a God, and every God was a bar.

Where man-made gods step in, knowledge ends. The masses were forced to submit to a deification of ignorance and of sensual passions; for these too were deified, and were found to be a powerful chain upon the human being. Theft had its patron deity; and Treachery, and Cunning, and even Lust had its temple of abominable worship. Instead of the Intellect being cultivated, and the Senses made subservient to the Intellect, the Senses were cultivated and the Intellect was made subservient to the Senses. Purity was kept a high Occult Secret. Rational happiness was unknown to the masses who then, as now, had chiefly irrational and unreal pleasures, and tasted life only in its very dregs.

The few who felt their way beyond the clouds of popular misconceptions followed the policy of the Initiates to whom the traditional Theosophy was confided, and adopted an Hermetic language, a System of veiled and Allegorical expressions to which, like the alchemists, they prudently retained the Key. In this manner they indeed effectually concealed their knowledge, but their terms passing out among the uninitiated who knew not the Occult meaning of these expressions, the Hermetic language misled them into accepting dead things as though they were the symbols of living principles which formed the Kabbalistic Science of the ancients.

It was when the Schools of Philosophy had to conceal their knowledge, or what little they knew, in Esoteric vocabularies, which for ages have puzzled and mystified thinking and inquiring minds, and these Schools of Philosophy had to form aristocratic cliques, in which, after years of probation, a little Esoteric lore was imparted, that the Cynics appeared, and made a counter-blast with a rough-and-ready Theosophy of their own, which would shock our refined sensibilities, as it must have repelled such cultured ancients as Plato, Aristotle, and others.

The Cynics were a remarkable phenomenon in Greece. Here we find Grecian Yogis aggressively introducing themselves with the same doctrine subsequently in part adopted by some of the Stoics and Gnostics, and which was treasured by the Initiates of the Hermetic, Eleusinian, Eleatic, Academic, and other Schools of Theosophy.

"Cynicism," says *Lewes*, in his *History of Philosophy*, p. 190, "consisted in the complete renunciation of all luxury—the subjugation of all sensual desires. It was a war carried on by the Mind against the Body. As with the Ascetics of a later day, the basis of a pure life was thought to be the annihilation of the Body; the nearer any one approached to such a suicide the nearer he was to the ideal of virtue. The body was vile, filthy, degraded, and degrading; it was the curse of man; it was the clog upon the free development of Mind; it was wrestled with, hated, and despised. This beautiful Body, so richly endowed for enjoyment, was regarded as the sink of all iniquity." . . . . .

"It is not difficult to imagine the effect created by the Cynics in the gay, luxurious city of Athens. There the climate no less than the prevailing manners, incited every one to enjoyment. The Cynics told them that enjoyment was unworthy of men; that there were higher and purer things for man to seek. To the polished elegance of Athenian manners the Cynics opposed the most brutal coarseness they could assume. To the friendly flatteries of conversation they opposed the bitterest pungencies of malevolent frankness. They despised all men; and told them so."

The Cynics never had a System or a School to speak of; all they could do was to sneer. Yet even this unlearned ignorance was as wise as the most learned ignorance. For external to the Knowledge of the Absolute there is no Absolute Knowledge.

Pagan Theosophy became extinct because it was no longer popular. It is a sure sign of the dissolution of a social system when the religious feeling is forced down to the very lowest. Thus it was in Greece and Rome. The Hierophants had lost the key to their own Sanctuary, and when the Platonists attempted to revive Paganism they failed. The Pythagorean Philosophy never became a popular system, and it was in vain that appeals like the following were addressed to the people :—

> " *The Pythagorean System* is founded upon temperance, and love of work. Pythagoras instead of making religion serve to establish morality, causes morality to demonstrate religion, and that that religion only is true which benefits humanity ; thus the errors of impiety and of superstition are equally avoided. The object of this religious system is the love of all humanity. This system is a special gift to the poor and unhappy, to whom it offers continual consolation, and whom it inspires with infinite courage by demonstrating to them that all happiness lies within their own being, and if they only will it so, they are not less happy than those who are apparently more fortunate.
>
> " Without morals no civil institution can endure. The system of Pythagoras has all the essentials to render its ethics popular ; it is simple in its principles and easy to follow in practice, for it is not merely intended for philosophers, who are few, but for the common people whom it should chiefly persuade ; and as the masses of the people are mostly unhappy, they should therefore adhere to a system which proves itself the most useful to follow. The Pythagorean system of morality is purely humanitarian, and rests chiefly upon the bases of equality and charity ; finally, it is independent of all opinion, as it is founded only upon those ideas whereupon all rightminded men are agreed, namely, the innate sense of justice and true morality. He who will instruct the people in the truths of the Pythagorean system, will assuredly greatly benefit the human race, and his name will endure throughout the ages."—(*Cleobolus.*)

The exclusive Esoterism that all Philosophic Schools adhered to, both those who had something and those who had nothing to conceal, prevented and destroyed in the end the educational object it attempted to inaugurate. The aristocratic monopoly of Philosophy caused a democratic reaction in Cynicism, which subsequently, as a system of thought, became modified and ennobled into Stoicism.

But Christianity, far better than Cynicism, became a natural sequence to the reaction from Pagan corruption; and we find that these heathen religions really formed a preparatory step for Christianity, and that instead of degenerating towards something worse, they served to prepare the way for something better.

The apostle Paul tells the Athenians that they are really worshipping the true God, and Paul believed what he said; he told them that all they needed was to have their understanding enlightened. "The Unknown God whom ye ignorantly worship, Him declare I unto you." He recognised their worship as passing beyond the idols to the true God, "the Lord of Heaven and Earth," "the God not dwelling in temples made with hands, not far from every one of us, for in Him we live, and move, and have our being, *as certain also of your own poets have said*, for we are also His offspring." Thus quoting their own poets in proof of God's Fatherhood. "Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art or man's device." (Acts xvii.) Christ also recognises that all good men among heathen nations belong to Himself, even though they had never heard of Him, and accordingly He said to the Jews, "Other sheep I have, though not of this fold." Sheep "who knew His voice, and were ready to follow Him." "Before whom shall be gathered all nations." Both of Jews and Gentiles, or Pagans.

However unhappy it may have been for noble and glorious beings like Hypatia to be attached to the losing cause, the old systems had to disappear. Christianity was no doubt considered by the cultured Heathen a religion for slaves, but it had the virtue of being new, and of causing the abolition of effete institutions and too stationary views.

The Theosophic Ideas of the Ancient Romans.

The great mission of the Romans was to stamp upon the minds of mankind the ideas of Law, Government, and Order. The Roman Laws, originating from *inspiration*, were subsequently the result of ages of experience, and have entered more or less into the modern jurisprudence of Europe. Those of Spain, the noblest and most equitable of any if only properly administered, are entirely based upon the Ancient Roman Laws. The Roman nation was one of the noblest the world has seen; they were a rare and a high-minded people. Roman greatness was rooted in the courage of her men, and still deeper in the honour of her women. They observed the sanctity of the domestic ties, and the sacredness of home was watched over by two guardian deities (Lares and Penates). The pure and Eternal

Fire in her temples, symbol of the duration of the Republic, was tended by Vestals; thus female chastity guarded the Eternal City.

The Romans originally had no statues in their Temples—their early faith taught access to God through the mind rather than through the senses. The Statues of the Gods were first introduced from Greece, whose polytheistic system was the most elaborate and magnificent the human imagination could conceive. "A full river of influence," says Cicero, "and not a little brook, has flowed into Rome out of Greece" (Republic, ii. 19). In this way the twelve Gods of Olympus: Zeus, Poseidôn, Apollo, Arês, Hephæstos, Hermes, Hêrê, Athênê, Artemis, Aphroditê, Hestia, and Dêmêter were naturalised or identified as Jupiter, Neptune, Apollo, Mars, Vulcan, Mercury, Juno, Minerva, Diana, Venus, Vesta, and Ceres. In the course of time there is said to have been in Rome three hundred Jupiters, which of course means that Jupiter was worshipped under three hundred different attributes.

"The religions of the Greeks and Romans were originally, like their languages, very, closely connected, as the names of some of the chief gods prove. The traces of agreement would certainly be still more numerous had not the difference in national character and in outward circumstances, led each of the two religions to develop itself for a considerable time in exactly opposite directions, till the nations came once more in contact with each other, and their religions blended together. The aim of the Greek was towards a more and more complete anthropomorphism, which Attic sculpture wrought out to perfection; but to this the Roman felt an instinctive aversion. He was too little of an artist, and had also too deep a reverence for the higher powers to represent them as beings resembling men. The powers of nature, so far as they had not yet in an earlier period become personal deities, remained spirits to his view, or became personifications of abstract ideas. This is the character likewise of the new gods whom they created, beings who only possess a nebulous existence, rarely uniting in marriage or forming amorous connections, and remaining for the most part childless. The remains of the old Roman mythology are therefore extremely scanty. But the ideas which were elevated to the rank of spirits are innumerable. Not only has every man his Genius, and every woman her Juno, but every deity also, together with every being, every object, every action or function, every moral quality even, has its own spirit, which is limited to its own province. If the dominant elements in Greek mythology are personality, freedom, and the richest diversity, the Roman theology is characterised by the abstract idea, by necessity, by the severest order and monotony. The difference between the two corresponds exactly to that between the Hindû and Persian religions, to the latter of which the character of the Roman affords a complete parallel." . . . .

"Much greater weight was attached by the practical Roman to the cultus than to the doctrines of religion. This was the one point of supreme importance; in his view the truly devout man was he who punctually performed his religious obligations, who was pious according to law. There was a debt to be paid to the gods which must be discharged, but it was settled if the letter of the contract was fulfilled, and the symbol was given in place of the reality." . . . "Everything was regulated with precision by the government; and the fact that the highest of the priests was always under the control of the state, prevented the rise of a priestly supremacy, the absence of which in Greece was due to other causes; but the consequence was that the Roman religion remained dry and formal, and was external rather than inward. Even the purity (*castitas*), on which such great stress was laid, was only sacerdotal, and was attained by lustration, sprinkling, and fumigation; and the great value attached to prayer, so that a single error had to be atoned for as a neglect, had its basis in the superstitious belief that it possessed a high magic power. Such a religion was certainly intelligible to all; it was not without favourable influence on political and social life, and it was admirably adapted to form a well-organised army of conquerors, a nation that could rule the world; but to spiritual life it contributed nothing, and it did little for the advancement of speculation, poetry, or art." . . . . "It soon became evident that a cold formal state religion of this kind, though it was now surrounded with great pomp, and was raised to be a symbol of a bold political idea, while it might satisfy a few statesmen and patricians, could not meet the wants of a whole people. This deficiency was perceived by the same kings who modified the native cultus, and they endeavoured to meet it by the introduction of foreign deities and usages."—*Tiele,* "*Outlines of the History of Religion,*" pars. 135, 139, and 141.

Amid the noise of officially-recognised state religion it was difficult to all but a student of the Occult such as Paul to observe that a knowledge of Divine Theosophy really existed in Rome. In writing to the Romans he speaks of the Gentiles having a knowledge of the eternal attributes of God (Rom. i. 19), and seeing Him in His works (v. 20), and that they also had "the law written in the heart." (Rom. ii. 14, 15.) But its perpetuation as a State Religion was a difficult task, as can be seen from the fact, that when the books of Numa were accidently unearthed they were immediately burnt by order of the Senate.

Numa, the first great legislator in Rome, was probably the last of the Adept Kings that reigned in ancient Italy. Plutarch's "Life of Numa" would justify such a supposition. Again, he is represented as giving laws, not from a human heart, but after secret communion with the Superhuman. In accordance with this we find the *institutions* of Rome referred to inspiration, and ever striving to exhibit on earth a copy of the Divine order of the Universe, the law of the heavenly hierarchies. The very word RE-LIGION (a binding, or rather re-binding, power) is a Roman word.

Livy says: Numa was a man most learned in all human and *Divine law*. Cicero: that Numa by his sacred constitutions laid the foundations of the greatness of the Roman empire. Tacitus: that Numa gave the people a settled form of religion and *Divine Law*. Plutarch: that there must be acknowledged to be something Divine in Numa, &c.

Archæological remains reveal that the Etruscans and other ancient Italian nations were a highly cultured and spiritually-developed people long before the Romans became a great nation. All this suggests that an Esoteric School of Theosophy may have been instituted by that king to rule the State religion, as a wheel within a wheel. The "Cult of Virtue" to which Philosophers and Initiates aspired, was popularly known and believed to conduct to a higher and more Divine state. But only few could be induced to "practise Virtue" and live the pure and holy life inculcated by all true Initiates and Philosophers, therefore the lesser Mysteries of Spiritualism were also here alone left as the Pantheon for the people.

The Sybilline Oracles are the only Occult volumes Ancient Rome has left, and they are partly prophetic, and partly Theosophic. They exhibit strong, though possibly unimitated, similarity to the prophetic books of the Old Testament, where mundane and Theosophic subjects often appear in close relationship. It is only to advanced students who understand the reason for this, and can discern the truth signified, under the symbolical figure employed to express it, to whom a perusal of these volumes can be recommended, so necessary is it to have the key to unlock the secrets of the Esoteric and Occult; in other words, to discern beneath "the letter which killeth" "the truth which giveth life."

The early Christian Fathers believed that God had one great plan for educating the world, of which Christianity was the final step. Thus, Clement of Alexandria refused to consider the Jewish religion as the only Divine preparation for Christianity, but regarded the Greek philosophy as also a preparation for Christ. He quotes Plato, and Hesiod, and Sophocles, and Cleanthes the Stoic:

> "Nor," says he, "must we keep the Pythagoreans in the background, who say 'God is one; and he is not, as some suppose, outside of this frame of things, but within it; in all the entireness of his being he pervades the whole circle of existence, surveying all nature, and blending in harmonious union the whole; the author of his own forces and works, the giver of light in heaven, and father of all; the mind and vital power of the whole world, the mover of all things.'"

Neander gives the views of Clement at length, and says that he was the founder of the true view of history. (Neander's Church History, vol. i., p. 540.) Tertullian declared the (Spiritual) Soul to be naturally Christian, and Socrates was called by the Fathers a Christian before Christ.

The Roman Cultus has formulated to a great extent the creed of Christian Ecclesiasticism. In Christian Baptism for instance we have but the Heathen Lustration under another name. Baptism may be called an outward visible sign of an inward spiritual grace, and Lustration may be said to be a mere superstition, nevertheless the similarity between the two, and the adaptation of one ceremony from the other, appears to us to be almost certain. Exoteric Christianity could only gain the masses by adapting itself to the popular demand for ceremonial observances. There is nothing disgraceful in supplying a harmless demand, but it is unreasonable to be blind to self-evident facts and attribute miraculous virtues to the mere outward ceremony. It requires a knowledge of Esoteric Christianity and of the deep Esoteric Truth underlying this particular ceremony, to fully comprehend its true significance.

Modern Romanism suffers from the very imperfections that destroyed the Old Roman Cultus. Externals in lieu of Internals, outward symbols in place of inward grace, Cult instead of Truth are inculcated; and unless the Christian Roman Church will profit by the disastrous experience of her Heathen predecessor, and place Theosophy, the Science of the Eternal Divine Wisdom, in her Sanctuary, instead of insisting on the efficacy of unimportant Externals, History may once more repeat itself.

CHAPTER VIII.

SEMITIC THEOSOPHY.

PART I.

THE KABBALA OR HEBREW THEOSOPHY.

WHILE other nations were sycophantly bowing to the dictates of sense-bound, more generally known as earth-bound spirits, and in return were reaping all the mental horrors and bodily degradations resultant upon the practice of black magic, the Jews were being saved from these superstitions by Divine interposition.

Theosophy is a knowledge of the Divine Wisdom. This truth we have often repeated, as we wish it to be realised that it is the foundation stone upon which the regenerating and saving portion of every true religion is based; it is therefore all important that we keep it ever before the minds of our readers. Theosophy was most markedly the Salvation of the Jews, as it has been, and ever must be, the salvation, individually and collectively, of every being that has sinned in the universe. Disguise Theosophy in what form of words you may, yet where there is Salvation there must be Theosophy, or the Knowledge of the Divine Wisdom, for without it Salvation cannot be.

The Kabbala transmits to us such knowledge as the Adepts of those times chose to commit to writing. Our Scriptural allegories are based on the Kabbala, which more recent adepts in Theosophy have elucidated, and which are known to us moderns as "The Kabbalistic Doctrine."

Monotheism is the only true Theosophy, and Moses taught the strict unity of God, "Hear, O Israel, the Lord our God is ONE Lord" (Deut. vi. 4), a statement which Jesus calls the chief of the Commandments (Mark xii. 29, 30). The Jews were called the *chosen* people, and considered themselves more especially under the Divine protection on account of their firm adherence to the one God, the God of Israel.

Jewish Theosophists, or Kabbalists, as these are commonly called, claim the Bible to be an Occult Book wherein their Theosophic or Kabbalistic system is embodied in Allegories, Symbols, &c.; the written and oral laws, they say, are dependent on and complete each other.

In the ceremonial Law the Jewish Mystic sees Kabbalistic mnemonics, and every ceremony has to him an Occult reason. To our view these reasons may appear less profound than their inventors would desire. Many a ceremonious performance may seem trivial to us, but those who know of no other Theosophy than that of their national tribe, cannot be expected to see these things quite clearly and impartially, much less to comprehend their Divine meaning.

Of the inner life of the Jews comparatively little is known, but it can be traced even in the Bible, that a traditional Theosophy was extant, which the Nazarites and the schools of the Prophets, and later, the Essenes and Kabbalists, and possibly also the initiated Talmudists, perpetuated, but which the Kabbalistic schools that followed Akiba and Simon Jochai, consolidated into a scientific system in the books Jezira and Sohar.

The two chief classics of the Kabbala, Jezira and Sohar, attributed respectively to Akiba and Simon Jochai, reveal the basis of the Occult Theosophy of the Hebrews. These works, it is to be deplored, are, however, but little known to the orthodox Jews.

The most ancient, and also most comprehensive, is the Sefer Jezira, probably written by Rabbi Akiba.

The Sefer Jezira will be found translated in our "*Occult Texts*." The Sohar teaches us that the true Tora, or Law of Moses, is not in the literal but in the allegorical interpretation of the Pentateuch, and that the books of Moses serve merely as a vehicle for the communication of the Occult divine. (See "The Book of the Secret or the Mystery," in "*Occult Texts*.")

Among the Jews various symbols were apparently current to express the Great Arcanum to Initiates. Philo Judæus in his treatise "On the Allegories of the Sacred Laws," elucidates, in a very cautious manner, a few of these subjects.

The Creation, The Garden of Eden, The Deluge, The Tilling of the Earth by Noah, The Confusion of Languages, the Migration of Abraham, his two Wives, and many more such subjects, are Hermetic

Myths, having mystic truth as their foundation. Moses probably received and revived the Theosophy of Abraham, but tinged it with Egyptian Hermeticism, for we must remember that he was learned in all the wisdom of the Egyptians. It was to the Priests of Egypt to whom Pythagoras and Plato also went for instruction.

The *written law* of Moses made known in the Bible, and exoterically accepted by Orthodox Jews and Christians, is the Letter, which Christ tells us "*killeth*." To find the Spirit of this Law, or that which "*giveth Life*," we must turn to the *Oral Law* or tradition wherein was contained the Divine Kabbala, the Spiritual interpretation of material symbols. It is this tradition, namely, the esoteric Law of Moses which is the Tora whereof is recorded in the Talmud: "Moses received the Oral Law from Sinai and delivered it to Joshua, and Joshua delivered it to the Elders and the Elders to the Prophets, and the Prophets to the men of the great Synagogue." It must therefore be well understood that the Tora thus mentioned by the Talmud is not the *written*, but the *Oral* Law, or Kabbala, transmitted by tradition from generation to generation, until collected by Simon Jochai and preserved in the Volumes of the Zohar. The Talmudists verily claim the Talmud to be the Oral Law, but it is evident that the Talmud itself is a Kabbalistic book intended merely to be "a fence to the Divine Law" as orally transmitted.

"The Talmud (teaching) comprises the Mishna and the Gemara. The Mishna ('learning,' or 'second law') was, according to Jewish tradition, delivered to Moses on Mount Sinai. 'Rabbi

Levi, the son of Chama, says, Rabbi Simon, the son of Lakish, says, what is that which is written; I will give thee tables of stone, and a law and commandments which I have written, that thou mayest teach them? * The Tables are the Ten Commandments; the Law is the written law; and the commandment is the Mishna; 'which I have written' means the prophets and sacred writings; 'that thou mayest teach them,' means the Gemara. It teaches us that they were all given to Moses from Mount Sinai.' From Moses the Mishna was transmitted by oral tradition through forty 'Receivers,' until the time of Rabbi Judah the Holy. These Receivers were qualified by ordination to hand it on from generation to generation. Abarbanel and Maimonides disagree as to the names of these Receivers. While the Temple still stood as a centre of unity to the nation, it was considered unlawful to reduce these traditions to writing. But when the Temple was burned, and the Jews were dispersed amongst other peoples, it was considered politic to form them into a written code, which should serve as a bond of union, and keep alive the spirit of patriotism. The Jewish leaders saw the effect of Constitutions and Pandects in consolidating nations—the advantage of written laws over arbitrary decisions. Numberless precedents of case law, answering to our common law, were already recorded: and the teachings of the Hebrew jurisconsults, or 'Responsa prudentium,' which were held to be binding on the people, had been preserved from former ages. All these traditions Rabbi Judah the Holy undertook to reduce into one digest. And this laborious work he completed about A.D. 190, or more than a century after the destruction of Jerusalem by Titus. Rabbi Judah was born on the day that Rabbi Akibah died. Solomon is said to have foretold the event: 'One sun ariseth, and one sun goeth down.' Akibah was the setting and Judah the rising sun. The Mishna of Rabbi Judah, afterwards revised by Abba Areka, in Sura, is the text of the Babylon Talmud. The commentaries written on this text by various Rabbis in the neighbourhood of Babylon until the close of the fifth century, are called the Gemara (completion); and are published in twelve folio volumes, called the Babylon Talmud—the Talmud most esteemed by the Jews."

(Introduction to the Talmud by Joseph Barclay).

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* Exod. xxiv. 12.

The Talmud is the protective fence around the written Law, which in turn is the symbolical vehicle of the Divine Kabbala. Thus there were two traditions, an Exoteric tradition perpetuated in the Talmud, and an Esoteric tradition wherein the Kabbala was transmitted. The Exoteric tradition is permeated with Kabbalism, although the mere Talmudists know it not. One must be a Theosophist to know the reason of the precepts which tend towards a Divine life and to discern the Esoteric directions from Exoteric customs having no Divine object.

The Tora is of course full of occult ideas, but it cannot be disguised that the greatest part of the Ceremonial Law was simply Ceremonial Magic of a dubious character, and may in part have been copied from the Egyptians, Chaldeans, and Magi, with whom Hebrew Initiates, notwithstanding their usual exclusiveness, carried on an active though secret intercourse.

It is not our province to deal with Moses as an historical character. It is well known that he was a Magian or Adept in Divine knowledge, who had obtained access to the *true mysteries* of which the Egyptian superstitions represented the degradation; and whose object was to detach from the world-creed and build up apart a true church based upon sacred Theosophy, *i.e.*, Divine Wisdom. Hence, instead of suffering his followers to seek after extraneous "spirits" or to practise the acts of sorcery, he insisted on worship being directed exclusively to Jehovah, the one universal creative Lord, who as the God at once of Macrocosm and Microcosm is the central spirit of man himself; he also insisted on perfect purity of thought, word, and act as the sole means of salvation. "His laws rested on two pivots, an absolute Divine Will, and strict Divine Justice. There was a third idea, which it was one of his great objects to inculcate, that of Holiness. "God is a holy God, his law is a holy law, the place of his worship is a holy place, and the Jewish nation a holy people." As a true prophet we must suppose that his sacrifices consisted not in the shedding of innocent blood, but in the offering to God the "Ram" of a sanctified intellect, and the "Lamb" of a pure spirit, while in the same way the hostile tribes destroyed by him were symbolical of the evil thoughts and propensities of his own people, their unbelief and idolatries. It was through the degeneration of the priests who followed him that his pure and holy doctrine became materialised and blood-thirsty. The Sacrificial holocausts so offensive to our modern human ideas, although thus promulgated as "The Law of Moses," were really the too literal rendering of an ignorant and rapacious Priesthood.

At the period alluded to, a Sacrificial Cultus was a universal institution among all hierarchies without exception, thus the Jewish Priesthood was but following the prevailing spirit of the time; but let us not accuse the great and divinely inspired Law-giver of instituting these abhorrent sacrifices of innocent victims. Let us not judge by appearances, or "the letter which killeth," and which certainly would appear against him when we remember that the Book of Leviticus abounds with instructions for these wholesale butcheries, and which we must not disguise from ourselves were interpreted according to the Letter by the very Talmudists who pretended to be the sole keepers of the Oral Law.*

Those among the Israelites who desired and aspired to the Divine Life, were actually compelled to excuse themselves, and bring a sacrifice to the Jehovah of priestcraft. To be a Nazarite (one of the secret "*Brethren*") was held as a reproach in that very Tora which nevertheless is a strictly Kabbalistic book.

If an authentic history of the Nazarites could be written, it would be there that the true religious life of the Jews would be found. We can only trace the Nazarites so far as to discern that gradually schools were formed by the people, called schools of seers or prophets, and we say so advisedly; for as these Seers or Adepts among the Jews abstained from the same wrong things that the Nazarites eschewed, and had the same object in view, we may safely conclude that the Nazarites were early prophets and the prophets were the later Nazarites.* The true is always hated by the false, and we can understand the persecutions the disciples of Truth had to endure from the Jewish priesthood. Indeed the Bible affords ample evidence of a continual struggle between priest and prophet.

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* The Rationale of the Sacrificial Culte, ably discussed in pp. 102—107 of "The Perfect Way," points out that "the effusion of physical blood has, in all ages, been a means whereby magicians have evoked astral phantoms. "Blood begets phantoms, and its emanations furnish certain spirits with the materials requisite to fashion their temporary appearances." Paracelsus also asserts that "by the fumes of blood one is able to call forth any spirit," &c. Thus, as more blood is shed in a day in the enormous slaughter-houses of our great cities than was in Jerusalem for years, it must unavoidably attract these evil spirits in swarms, who thus literally dwell amongst us, and their malign influence is but too apparent in the impure and immoral conduct of those inhabitants whom they are able to infest.

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* "Jesus Christ was called a Nazarite, not a Nazarene. It is odd enough that our learned Grecians should not see that *Ναζωραιος* does not mean Nazarene, but Nazarite: had it meant Nazarene it would have been *Ναζαρηνος*. He was a Nazarite of the city of Nazareth, or of the city of the Nazarites. At that place was the Monastery of Nazarites or Carmelites, where Pythagoras and Elias both dwelt, *under* Carmel, the Vineyard or Garden of God. . . . . . Nazareth, the town of Nazir or *Ναζωζαιος*, *the flower*, was situated in Carmel, the Vineyard or Garden of God. Jesus was a flower; whence came the adoration, by the Rosicrucians, of the Rose and Cross, which Rose was Ras, and this Ras (Knowledge, or Wisdom), was stolen from the garden and crucified on a cross. . . . . . Pope Gregory the Great invited the Carmelites from Syria and Egypt to Rome, and founded two most splendid and beautiful monasteries of the barefoot and the calceated orders; and at that time he abolished their old rule and gave them a new one. At both times when I visited Rome, I applied to the librarians at the monasteries and endeavoured to obtain a sight of their old rule, by which they lived before the time of Gregory, which they acknowledged they possessed, but of which, after having been promised it, they would not permit me to have the inspection. Within the cupola of St. Peter's is a colossal statue of the Prophet Elias, under which is the inscription, 'Universus Carmelitarum Ordo Fundatori suo S. Eliæ Prophetæ erexit AMDCCXXVII.' I believe if he were not the founder he regulated the Order. But its first regulation, I think, may be found in the sixth chapter of Numbers, verses 13 to 21. A slight attention will satisfy any reader that Moses was then regulating an order brought from Egypt, not instituting a new one." (Anacalypsis, vol. ii., p. 44.)

Thus in Judaism we behold another illustration of the futility of man attempting to limit God to one particular tribe or class. God is Universal, and not a national tribal God. He animates all, and makes himself known to all. If a man will do the work of God and impart God unto all, his work is Divine, and shall endure for ever; but if he would make God do his will and attempt to limit God, his work is human, and shall perish.

The Nazarites and the Prophets were most undesired accessions to the Jewish Hierarchy. The temporizing Samuel alone excepted, who was more a Medium than an Adept, the Seers stood in stern opposition to the Priests and Levites. Even the eloquent David speaks out in his mystic hymns in a manner totally inimical to orthodox Judaism. While Isaiah, Zechariah, Ezekiel, Daniel, and most of the minor prophets are hardly within the pale of Judaism. They are Hebrew Catholics, the forerunners of the Essenes, that holy order which is supposed to have counted Jesus among its members. The Prophet is one who hears a voice from heaven, while a Priest or Scribe only echoes what the other has heard.

God's covenant with the Patriarchs was neither more nor less than a revelation of the laws of conduct requisite for a Divine Life. The material symbols must all be spiritualized. Each of the Patriarchs probably imparted the simple Divine knowledge symbolically, Adam,* Noah, Abraham, Isaac, Jacob, and his twelve sons, may even be mythic personages. The twelve tribes, of whom ten so mysteriously disappear and are nowhere to be found, may have had only mystic or mythic existence. Tacitus (Lib. V. Hist.) however, alludes to the Exodus of the Jews from Egypt, but not so clearly as does Moses in the Pentateuch. At all events, though and *because* we accept the Occult Law, we are not bound to hold blindly to the written volumes and adore the letter.

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* There may have been untold millions of human beings before Adam fell from the Divine state allegorically represented as Eden.

It is the Spirit alone that gives life, that Holy Spirit which Moses and the prophets had in part, which was plenary with Christ and the Apostles, and abides ever with mankind. It is the spirit of God, the Divine voice, or Word, within us, and to know that God is within us is true Theosophy.

The written Law of Moses soon degenerated into empty formalism, and the Soul-life of the aspiring Jews sought for itself a higher aim and end. It was in vain that Solomon built a visible Temple to inculcate the grades and secrets of the Invisible Soul-Life. The priests cared not for the symbols so long as they had a remunerative Church, and the people could not understand Solomon's architectural Occultism. The Seers without much mystification went right to the fountain-head, and their doctrine was listened to with avidity. These spoke of the Divinely Anointed, the God-man, the Ruler of all worlds, the Word, the God within us.

They were not all understood rightly; hardly in the present day is there one in a million that can understand the occult meaning of the words of a Divine

Initiate. As it is now so it was then, the unthinking ever were the majority.

In studying Hebrew Theosophy we must thus take into consideration that the Bible and especially the Tora is a Kabbalistic book, allegorically written, and symbolically illustrated. (The system of the Kabbala and Esoteric Masonry are identical, and for this reason the Masons call their temple the Temple of Solomon.) Moses and the Prophets, the Nazarites, Essenes, Ebionites, and others among the Jews, as the Tanaim, Geonim, were Theosophists, and consequently most, if not all their writings, are manifestly or occultly treatises on Theosophy. In the treatises of the later Jews this is not quite so apparent, but the Theosophy of the Hebrews is nevertheless *not* to be limited only to what now goes by the name of the Kabbala, as all Judaism is in a manner permeated by an imperfect theosophic spirit, and the Jew of to-day who desires to become a Theosophist, will find the same path is likewise open to him whereby his forefathers have passed unto perfection. So also has the Roman Catholic Church left the door to the sanctuary open, and they who wish to renounce the world can do so. The Protestants alone have no institutions for Theosophy, yet from among them also have arisen great teachers of our Art.

The Jewish ceremonial as it survives to the present day, ridiculous and childish as it may appear, nevertheless claims, and probably has a Kabbalistic base, Its virtue may justly be doubted, seeing there are so many beings of other nations who have passed unto perfection without even knowing of its existence. There are moral, hygienic, and spiritual rules of conduct given, but these must naturally occur to the minds of all right-thinking individuals. When the Jews, therefore, would claim that theirs is the only true Theosophy and all others are spurious, we cannot, with the knowledge we have of other systems, admit that claim.

The highest thought that the greatest Jew ever expressed was Universality. True Theosophy is catholic —appealing to all, not to a tribe only. Buddha and Christ speak not to Hindus and Jews only, they speak to all mankind. The greatest Jew was a true man, and saw that Theosophy was not Judaism but Humanity; and yet after the lapse of nigh upon twenty centuries, true Christianity, the Theosophy of Christ, is still almost unknown, and the world continues to languish under the baneful influence of Pharisaism.

The mystic Tora or Kabbala, is not the Pentateuch, but the tradition of the Logos, or Divine Word, the God in our own Being. The written Law is by the Kabbalists assumed to be a concealed path to the unwritten or occult Law of Re-birth. This occult Law or tradition is also said to be the Guide to the Divine Word, the Logos, or Manifestation of the Absolute. The Manifestation is not communicable, it must be striven for or cannot be attained. An Adept can by tradition transmit what he knows, and what he experiences, but that is all. That the spiritual secret of the Law was known among the initiated and learned

Jews can be gathered from the words of the Prophets and also from their method of life.

The question now arises, if the Biblical narratives are historical incidents, how can they have a mystic meaning? We do not hunt for esoteric mysteries in the history of other nations, why then should that of the Hebrews be thus treated? And yet according to the Kabbalists, and also according to the Fathers of the Christian Church, Origen, Ambrose, Jerome, all these narratives are certainly allegorical.

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In order to know the reason why Biblical narration is allegorical, and has an Esoteric meaning, we must turn to the few records we have of the Essenes, the Jewish Sect of which we know the least, for they always kept, or have been kept, as much as possible out of sight. We are told both by Philo and Josephus that there were three principal Sects among the Jews. These were the Sadducees, the Pharisees, and the Essenes. The two first are often mentioned in the New Testament—the third never—but instead of it we meet with a multitude of references to "the brethren." Now a close and careful study of the Scriptures has convinced some Theosophists amongst us that the New Testament writers were these very "brethren," the Essenes; for it would be absurd to suppose such profoundly Spiritual writings could have proceeded from the Scribes, Sadducees, or Pharisees, who are ever mentioned in the Gospels as "hypocrites," "serpents," and a "generation of vipers."

We learn from Philo that the members of the "*brotherhood*" were not only sworn to secrecy, but were also sworn not to commit any portion of their doctrine to writing, excepting in allegory and symbolism, by means of which they received their own instruction. They had everything in common, and were called "Holy," on account of their great piety and devotion to God. We learn that one of their distinctive customs was to assemble and listen to interpretations of the Hebrew Sacred writings from the Elders among them. The following statement of Philo furnishes an important key to the nature of their own allegorical books:

> "And these explanations of the Sacred Scriptures are delivered by mystic expressions in allegories; for the whole of the Law appears to these men to resemble a living animal, and its express Commandments seem to be the Body, and the invisible meaning under and lying beneath the plain words resembles the Soul, in which the rational Soul begins most excellently to contemplate what belongs to itself, as in a mirror, beholding in these very words the exceeding beauty of the sentiments, and unfolding and explaining the symbols, and bringing the secret meaning to the light of all who are able, by the light of a slight intimation, to perceive what is unseen by what is visible."

The immense importance of this statement will be seen at once both as concerns the LAW and the Gospels. In another place the Essenes are said:

> "To take up the Sacred Scriptures and philosophize concerning them, investigating the allegories of their national philosophy, since they look upon their literal expressions as symbols of some secret meaning of nature, intended to be conveyed in 'these figurative expressions.'"

They are said also:

> "To have writings of ancient men, who, having been the founders of one sect or another, have left behind them many

memorials of the allegoric system of writing and explanation, and they imitate the general fashion of their sect; so that they do not occupy themselves solely in contemplation, but they likewise compose psalms and hymns to God in every kind of meter and melody imaginable."

These extracts from Philo and Josephus are necessarily very slight, for we have still to refer to other authorities, all directing us to the same conclusion, viz., that the Gospel is the *spiritual* exposition of the Law, and of one nature with the Law; and again, if the Gospel, or Godspell, be regarded in the Letter, then that this Letter was conceived in the same spirit of Truth that moved the holy men of old who wrote the earlier Scriptures. In the third chapter of Paul's Epistle to the Hebrews, the "Man," "Christ Jesus, was counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as he who hath builded the house hath more honour than the house." This is precisely the same mysticism. The "house" is the Law given by Moses; but the Spirit is the "Builder" of the Law, and this is the Spirit of Christ. "The Man Christ Jesus" was no doubt an historical person, probably, however, not a Carpenter's Son, except as HIRAM, the Builder of a House not made with hands, was a MASON. In like manner, as the disciples of Truth may have been fishermen seeking the *living* Truth in the great deep, the everlasting Ocean of living Water, the writers of the Gospels were not ordinary men, they were very extraordinary men, as any one may know who will read Philo's account of the Therapeutæ. The *spirit* that guided them is the same spirit of the Hebrew

Sacred Land; He is the Light, the Eternal Word, the Holy One of Israel, Our Lord, The TRUTH; and He is the ever-present Emmanuel, or God with us.

The teachings of Paul are full of this Divine Truth. He speaks of the LAW as a Schoolmaster to bring us to Christ; and throughout his Epistles he continually speaks of the LAW and of Christ in conjunction, telling us that Moses and all our Fathers drank of that Spiritual Rock that followed them; and that that Rock was Christ (1 Cor. x.). The third chapter of the Galatians is full of this, and the *fourth* still more so, for not only does he say:

> "When we were children we were in bondage under the elements of the world. But when *the fulness of the time was come*, God sent forth his Son, made of a woman, made under the Law, to redeem them that were under the Law, that we might receive the adoption of sons. And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying Abba, Father. Wherefore, thou art no more a servant, but a son; and if a son, then an heir of God through Christ."

But he tells us also plainly in this fourth chapter that what is written of Abraham and his two sons, by the bondwoman and the freewoman, is an allegory representing the two Covenants; the one from Mount Sinai gendering to bondage, which is Agar:

> "For this Agar is Mount Sinai in Arabia, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free, which is the mother of us all."

Let us read part of the third chapter of his Second Epistle to the Corinthians:

> "Forasmuch as ye are manifestly declared to be the epistle of Christ ministered by us, written not with ink, but with the spirit

of the living God; not in tables of stone but in fleshy tables of the heart . . . our sufficiency is of God; who also hath made us able ministers of the New Testament, not of the letter but of the spirit; for the letter killeth, but the spirit giveth life. But if the ministration of death, written and engraven on stones was glorious, so that the children of Israel could not steadfastly behold the face of Moses for the glory of his countenance, which glory was to be done away, how shall not the ministration of the spirit be rather glorious. . . . For if that which is done away was glorious, much more that which remaineth is glorious. Seeing then we have such hope, we use great plainness of speech; and not as Moses, who put a veil over his face (*i.e.*, wrote in symbols), that the children of Israel could not steadfastly look to the end of that which is abolished. But their minds were blinded, for *until this day* remaineth the same veil untaken away in the reading of the Old Testament, which veil is done away in Christ. But even unto this day when Moses is read, the veil is upon their hearts. Nevertheless when it shall turn to the Lord, the veil shall be taken away. *Now the Lord is that Spirit* (not person), and where the Spirit of the Lord is there is liberty. And we all, with open face beholding as in a glass the glory of the Lord, are changed into the same image from glory to glory, even as by the Spirit of the Lord."

See also Romans xiii.:

"Render to all their dues: tribute to whom tribute is due, custom to whom custom, fear to whom fear, honour to whom honour. Owe no man anything, but to love one another; for he that loveth another hath *fulfilled the law*. . . . Thou shalt love thy neighbour as thyself. Love worketh no ill to his neighbour, therefore love is the *fulfilling* of the law."

In Deut. xxx. 11—14 we read:

"For this commandment which I command thee this day, it is not hidden from thee, neither is it far off. It is not in heaven that thou shouldst say, Who shall go up for us to heaven, and bring it unto us, that we may hear it and do it? Neither is it beyond the sea, that thou shouldst say, Who shall go over the sea for us, and bring it unto us, that we may hear and do it? But the word is very nigh unto thee, in thy mouth, and in thy heart, that thou mayest do it."

In the tenth chapter of Romans (4—8) we have St. Paul's interpretation of the above in these words:

> "For CHRIST is the end of the LAW for righteousness to every one that believeth. For *Moses* describeth righteousness which is of the law, that the man which doeth those things shall live by them. But the righteousness which is of faith speaketh on this wise: Say not in thine heart, who shall ascend into heaven? that is, to bring down CHRIST from *above;* or who shall descend into the deep? that is, to bring up CHRIST again from the dead. But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith which we preach."

Here, then, we see that CHRIST is called the end, that is, the object of the Law; and accordingly the first time we hear of Christ teaching in the Synagogue at Nazareth, "he found the place in the Prophet Isaias where it was written":

> "The Spirit of the Lord is upon me, because he hath anointed me to preach the Gospel to the poor (those who have it not); he hath sent me to heal the broken-hearted, to preach deliverance to the captives (those still under the law), and recovering of sight to the blind (the spiritually blind), to set at liberty them that are bruised ('the Truth shall make you free'), to preach the acceptable year of the Lord. And he closed the book, and he gave it again to the minister, and sat down; and the eyes of all them that were in the synagogue were fastened upon him, And he began to say unto them, This day is this Scripture *fulfilled* in your ears. And all bare him witness, and wondered at the gracious words which proceeded out of his mouth." (St. Luke iv. 17—22.)

But time and space would fail us to quote from the Scriptures, and particularly from St. Paul, in confirmation of what we have advanced; let us, then, now turn to the Fathers of the Christian Church, and we shall find Eusebius, in the fourth century, dictinctly giving the opinion that the Christian Gospels and Epistles *were some of the secret books* of the Essene brotherhood. Although endeavouring to prove that the Essenes were early Christians under another name, as though their rise had been subsequent to the advent of Christ. But the real and genuine sources of information concerning them are to be found in the Talmudic writings; the Mishna, Beraitha, and Talmud speak of them in general as Chasidim (Assidaioi pious men), as Nazirim, and as Chaberim (Friends). The Arabic book of *Maccabees* calls the Essenes simply Assidaioi, and Macrisi speaks of Nazirs, Essenes, and Baptists as all being Asaniun or Essenes. One fragment of their literature is quoted in the Talmud (Jerusch. Berachoth, End) in the following words: "It is written in the Book of the *Chasidim*, 'If thou leavest it (the Divine Law) for one day, it will leave thee for two.'" (*Chambers' Encyclopædia.*) But besides these authorities we have the books of Philo and of Josephus, which fully establish their great antiquity; and if more were wanting, it is well known that the Freemasons of the present day not only claim, through their accredited Lecturers, Dr. Oliver and others, that Freemasonry has come down from the Essenes, but they assert that the Essenes were in possession of what they call the Temple Secrets in the days of Solomon.

Thus they were alike the forerunners of the Jewish Kabbalists and of the Christian Gnostics, but what is more surprising than all is, that out of Essenism has sprung Islam, and in this last development of its tenets and practices are still preserved many of its principal rites and ceremonies. We read in the Anacalypsis concerning them as follows:

> "The Essenes were a fraternity of Hermetists. The Cabala based on the Laws of Manu solves the Esoterism of every religion. The doctrines of Zoroaster, Pythagoras, Plato, are all contained in the Jewish Cabala. Alone among all the Books of the Bible Genesis belongs to an immense antiquity. . . . . We know that the Essenes existed in Syria as well as in Egypt, and the same system probably prevailed in both. The Essenes in each case were the professors of the highest order of the Cabala, the *perfecti*, the prophets of the Old Testament, and of Elias, their superior. The Essenes were Carmelite monks. What has become of them? When did the Order die? But it did not die: it yet exists in the Carmelites."—("Anacalypsis," by Godfrey Higgins, vol. ii., p. 275.)

Indeed, the great and striking similarity between the doctrines of the Essenes, of Jesus, and of Pythagoras, amounts almost to proof of the identity of these systems. The Essenes were most certainly a class of Esoteric or Hermetic Theosophists among the Jews, who were in possession of the secret meaning of the Hebrew sacred books; as we have seen, they regarded "*the whole of the Law*" as a LIVING CREATURE (no doubt MAN was referred to); the mere Letter answering to the body, while the mysterious internal Sense answered to the Soul. St. Paul constantly speaks of the "Mystery of Christ," of the "mystery which had been kept secret since the world began" (Rom. xvi. 25). He calls it the mystery of Christ made known to him by revelation (Ephes. iii. 3), which in other ages was not made known unto the sons of men as it is now revealed unto his holy Apostles and Prophets by the Spirit. "To make all men see what is the fellowship of the mystery which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God, who created all things by Jesus Christ."

These Hermetic Theosophists, for such the Jewish Sect called the Essenes undoubtedly were, also had a secret mystery which the brethren were solemnly sworn not to divulge, as they were also sworn not to *write their secret except in allegory or symbolism;* and whilst they maintained its secrecy the brotherhood lived amicably side by side with the Jewish Church; it was when St. Paul, and others, had been added to their number from "without" (outsiders, those not thoroughly initiated in the doctrine), that the preaching gradually became public, and the Society received a new name, that of "Christians," which was first given them at Antioch; and this was the beginning of the *visible* Christian Church. From that time, if not sooner, peace for them was at an end, and their persecutions began. We can thus understand the allusion to *mysteries* concealed by an oath, to be found in the apology of Tertullian, where this Father defends the Christians from their enemies by an argument. "If we always keep hid, how are those things known which we are said to commit? Nay, who could make them known? Such as are guilty? Not so, surely; for all *mysteries* are, of course, under an *oath of secrecy.* The Samothracian, the Eleusinian Mysteries, are concealed (by an oath), how much rather such as, being discovered, would now provoke the justice of men, and might expect to meet with that of God hereafter?"

We see by their writings that the early Christian Fathers had a knowledge of the Secret, and it can hardly be doubted that some among them were initiated Essenes, bound by a solemn oath not to disclose the secret doctrine. Clemens of Alexandria is quoted as saying that "the Christian discipline was called *Illumination*, because it brought to light the Master (Christ), by removing the covering of the Ark." Meaning the Veil over the writings of Moses alluded to by St. Paul (2 Cor. iii. 14). Origen compares the Scriptures to a man, as Philo tells us the Essenes did. "As a man," says he, "consists of a body, a soul, and a spirit, so does the Sacred Scripture, which has been mercifully given for the Salvation of mankind." In another place he says, "The Sacred Scripture is like a man; for as man consists of a rational soul, of a sentient, or sensuous soul, and of a body, so, in like manner, have the divine books a threefold sense, that is, an historical and a moral sense, and, finally, a spirit or spiritual sense."

Origen refers to Jesus as a *teacher of the spirit of the letter*, and adds: "Peter for a good while appears to have observed the Jewish customs according to the Law of Moses, as having not yet learned of Jesus *to ascend from the letter to the spirit of the Law*; as we learn from the Acts of the Apostles (chapter x. 9)." This distinct reference to the spirit of the Law by Origen shows him very clearly to have been an Essene. Again, he says of the Scriptures: "There are some things inserted as history which were never transacted, and which it is impossible should be transacted; and other things, again, that might possibly be done, but were not."

St. Hilary says: "There are many historical passages of the New Testament that, if they are taken literally, are contrary to sense and reason, and therefore there is a necessity of a mystical interpretation."

St. Agustine says: "There are hidden mysteries in the works and miracles of our Saviour, which, if we incautiously and literally interpret, we shall run into errors and make grievous blunders."

> "Since the Law is a shadow of good things to come," says Origen, "and writes sometimes of marriages, and husbands, and wives, we are not to understand it of marriages of the flesh, but of the spiritual marriage between Christ and his Church. As for instance, Abraham had two wives, &c. Here we ought not to confine our thoughts to carnal marriages and their offsprings, but to extend them to the mysteries here signified. And there are a thousand other places in Scripture about marriages, but every place should have a Divine, moral, and mystical construction put upon it. Whoever, therefore, reads the Scriptures about marriages, and understands no more by them than carnal marriages, errs, not knowing the Scriptures, nor the power of God."

Even St. Paul says the same thing concerning marriage, of which he writes so often. In his Epistle to the Ephesians, chap. v., he interprets himself lest his reader should not understand him (verse 32): "This is a great mystery; but I speak concerning CHRIST and the Church."

Origen tells us that "the Scriptures are of little use to those who understand them as they are written." He says that "the source of many evils lies in adhering to the carnal or external part of Scripture;" and adds that "those who do so shall not attain to the Kingdom of God." Christ Himself said to Nicodemus (John iii. 3): "Except a man be born of water (flesh) and the Spirit, he cannot see the Kingdom of God." "Let us seek, therefore," says Origen, "for the Spirit, and the substantial fruits of the WORD, which are hidden and mysterious."

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Origen, St. Augustine, St. Theophilus of Antioch, St. Cyril, St. Jerome, all Fathers of the Church, interpret the marriage scene at Cana of Galilee in a spiritual sense, as designed to represent the union of the Inner to the Outer, which turns the WATER (that is the *letter*) into *wine* (that is, SPIRIT). And this was most appropriately the *first* miracle our Lord (THE TRUTH) is described as performing.

To return to the Old Testament, St. Paul has explained to us the true significance of the allegory of Abraham and his two wives, in which the Law is represented under the allegory of a bond-woman, and the Spirit of the Law by the free-woman,—which signifies that where the Spirit is, there is liberty; or that as soon as we understand the reasonableness of a Law, the motive to obedience is found in the reason itself, and when truly seen in ourselves, we are moved to obedience by an internal impulse, it follows that in obeying a Law, we really obey our own higher nature,—and this is true freedom. "The Truth shall make you free." And thus only are we made free by the SPIRIT OF TRUTH itself.

As Isaac represents the Spirit of the Law in the allegory, he is said to figure Christ; and from this view we may see that the true New Testament is not the written Canon, so called, but that it is for ever new. The true New Testament is the SPIRIT OF THE LAW.

This Law, and SPIRIT OF THE LAW, in Christian countries is expressed by including both Testaments in one sacred volume as one written whole; and when this is properly understood, it is seen to show forth different stages of progression in the development of the *Son of Man* from infancy and youth, to manhood and the fulness of Christ—or the PERFECT MAN, the *Son of God*, the Infinite REASON which is the *Spirit of the Law*, and precedes all written Law, enabling its possessor to say, "I and my Father are One."

The LAW can never become a thing of the past. While the Son of Man exists at every stage of growth and development, God's Eternal Law must stand over him as "a Schoolmaster to lead him to Christ" (in the nature of COMMANDMENTS) throughout his minority. When he shall have come to man's estate, the state of the PERFECT MAN—which state is called the SON OF GOD—then does the Spirit bear witness in him, this Spirit becoming flesh, as in the "Man, CHRIST JESUS;" for, as Christ is one with God, so is He one with man; and to as many as receive this doctrine in spirit and in truth, God gives the power of becoming SONS OF GOD (John i. 12); or, as St. Paul expresses it, "As many as are led by the Spirit of God, they are the Sons of God." Thus, the "Only Son" may nevertheless be many, by the many simply being one in Spirit.

May we not be said in these days to see the Son of Man coming in "the clouds," for the written Scriptures are no doubt *clouds* in which the Divine word is hidden; then there are "clouds of witnesses, men and angels by whom we are compassed about" (Heb. xii.). Nay, "He is veiled in *our* being." And this is a truth for the Jews as well as for the Christians.

The Jews are still expecting the coming of a *personal* Immanuel, and the Christians are looking back to a *personal* Immanuel as having come in the past, and find it difficult to conceive of the ever-living and ever-present spirituality of the Holy One of Israel—the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow—as do the Jews themselves. The first think of a person who came, the latter think of a person who is to come. The conception is not essentially different so far as *personality* is concerned, but both Jew and Christian should endeavour to realize the ever-living presence of Christ, the Spirit of TRUTH, and that as many as are led by this Spirit are the Sons of God (Romans viii. 14).

Seeing Him only in recorded history, past or future, they forget that Christ, as the true object of faith, "was before Abraham," just as He is ever now present in the history of man, of whom He is THE LIFE. Moses, as the representative of the external LAW, does not reach the Land of Promise, which means that the Letter does not carry any one to Heaven, although it is the BODY or outward form of the same Son of God, who was before Abraham.

We must always bear in mind that that which distinguishes the sacred writings from profane books, so called, is not their historical verity, but it is the spiritual truth enclosed in the Divine representation. The historical character of the entire record might be surrendered without the loss of the eternal WORD that inspired it. When Jesus declared that "Heaven and earth shall pass away, but my words shall not pass away," He did not allude to words that were not yet written, but to that Eternal Truth in God, by whose authority He expressed Himself as speaking: "My doctrine is not mine, but His that sent me." "To this end was I born, and for this end came I into the world, that I should bear witness to THE TRUTH." "Every one that is of the Truth heareth my voice."

Godfrey Higgins, in his "Anacalypsis," says as follows:—

> "Faber, Nimrod, and Niebuhr have proved that all ancient history is little better than fable. This is true. It is all mythological. By this I do not mean to say that there is not some truth in it, but I mean to say that there is scarcely one history, perhaps not one, which does not contain more religious fable than truth. They do not appear to have been written for the same purpose as our grave and serious histories, but seem to have been a species of religious novels, mythoses made up of old traditions. . . . We must recollect there is scarcely a name in very ancient history, either sacred or profane, which was not an adopted or second name, or a name given with a reference to the supposed quality or office of its owner. Although Niebuhr has shown that almost all early Roman history is fable, this does not prove that during the three or four hundred years of Rome's fabulous period, that there was no Rome, that there were no consuls, no senates, or no people. It is equally rash to maintain that there were no wars of Joshua or Judges because we find the walls of Jericho falling to the sound of Rams' horns, or mythological history of Hercules

as Samson, or of Iphigenia as Jephtha's daughter. At the same time that Mr. Faber and Nimrod have proved the early Jewish history to be in great part the same as the mythology of the nations, they have shown us from the history of this mythology that it is the height of rashness hence to conclude that it is ALL FALSE. It doubtless in no way differs from the history of other nations; like them it has much fable, but doubtless founded upon truth. Why cannot the Jewish books be examined—like the history of Herodotus—by the rules of common sense?"

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For our own part we believe the Old Testament narratives to be true history in the highest sense, inasmuch as that it is the history of man in his relations to his Creator. For this reason it is called Sacred History, and the Book itself is styled "The Holy Bible." It is the history of the Soul in its process of development and in its progress to become the perfect man as represented to us in the second part of the same volume, styled the New Testament. In this sense it is history, but history of the inward, spiritual, and universal—although many of the narratives may be based on the outward historical and particular, which must ever necessarily serve as a vehicle for the inward and spiritual, as the Soul itself requires the vehicle of the body for all its actions and responsibilities. Nevertheless we must not forget that "the letter killeth," and that to cling only to the outward or historical form is to hug the perishable, it is also idolatry; "it is the spirit (or thing signified) that giveth life." Thus is it Sacred history, for the record it bears is of the dealings of God with man, and of the shortcomings, the battles, the struggles, the wanderings, of the Soul, in and through its material vesture in its onward and upward progress towards its Creator, who is represented as speaking to it through its conscience, or inward Divine consciousness.

Thus is the Bible at once Sacred and Universal history. Sacred because one of the two principal actors in it is the Holy One of Israel, the Lord of all the Earth, the Creator of the Universe, whom we call God, the same yesterday, to-day, and to-morrow; thus ONE, because Universal, therefore all-containing, the Macrocosm in fact, in whom we live and move, and have our being; and the other character represented is Man, originally created in the image of his Maker, male and female, because composed of Spirit and Soul (the Soul being feminine is ever represented by the woman); and, having drawn his outward body from the *humus* of the material earth, is human as well as Divine. Thus Adam (the earth man) is also a Universe in himself, inasmuch as he is the Microcosm, and, like his Creator, contains all within himself; for the whole material creation culminates in him, and in him may be said to live, move, and have its being; and thus does sacred history abound with records and comparisons, and sacrifices, both of clean and of unclean animals, as well as of accounts of noisome creeping things, for all have their being and their abode in unregenerate humanity, and the Bible contains the history of the development and purification of this Lesser Universe, or Microcosm, through the elevation of the *Anima Bruta*, the World, or Animal Soul, the first earth-mother, EVE, the outwardly beautiful serpent of the Old, which through all the trials and struggles of earthly purification and discipline, in the course of its development, becomes the *Spiritual Soul*, the MARY of the New Testament, the Virgin Mother of God in Man, as he may trace through the long genealogy of Jesus who is called Christ, ending in an *earthly* parent.

> "We read in the Zohar, one of the great Kabbalistic books, that the Serpent, son of the Sun, was about to devour the earth, when the sea, the daughter of the Moon, placed its foot on its head, and crushed it. It is on this account that Venus is styled by the ancients the Daughter of the Sea, as Diana was identical with the Moon. It is thus that the name of Maria signifies Star of the Sea, or Salt of the Sea, and it was in order to consecrate this Kabbalistic dogma in the belief of the masses, that prophetic language announced 'the seed of the woman shall bruise the head of the serpent.'"—("Haute Magic" of Eliphas Levi, p. 315.)*

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* This passage may appear a little obscure to the uninitiated, and may require some explanation. The Sun was ever the emblem of the male, and the Moon of the female generative principle. They are the two great lights. Water is also the emblem of the passive or female principle in opposition to Fire, the active principle. The Sun, light, or fire, was the preserver at the same time that he was the creator and the destroyer; but though he was the preserver and the regenerator, it is evident that he alone without an assistant element in the form of rain, or dew, or moisture, could regenerate nothing, even though that element itself was indebted to him for its existence. Water, then, was the agent by means of which everything was generated and re-generated, hence it is adopted as the outward and visible sign in Baptism, which ceremony itself signifies a new birth unto righteousness. Water is thus one of the emblems of maternity, or the GREAT MOTHER, who is therefore well symbolised by the Sea, the great deep, whose ever-flowing tides are influenced by the Moon. In the old language without vowels M^n means Moon; Venus, the Virgin Mother, rises from the foam of the sea, and Maria the Virgin Mother (Mater), whose name is derived from Mare (sea), and its bitterness, and whose initial letter, the *centre* one of the alphabet, is descriptive in its form of the ever-restless waves of

The following extract is from Vol. I., page 72, of "The Anacalypsis," by Godfrey Higgins:

> "As all the ancient heathen nations had their mysteries or secret doctrines, which the priests carefully kept from the knowledge of the vulgar, and which they only communicated to a select number of persons whom they thought they could safely trust; and as the Jewish religion was anciently the same as the Persian, it will not be thought extraordinary that, like the Persian, it should have its secret doctrines. So we find it had its Cabala, which, though guarded, like all ancient mysteries, with the most anxious care and the most solemn oaths, cannot be entirely hidden from the prying curiosity of the Moderns. In defiance of all its concealment and mischances, enough escapes to prove that it was fundamentally the same as that of the Persian Magi; and thus adds one more proof of the identity of the religions of Abraham and Zoroaster."

The doctrine here alluded to was a secret one—more perfect, the Jews maintain, than that delivered in the

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the sea, is always represented with a crescent-shaped moon in some way or other, generally as standing upon it, or upon the serpent, the symbol of earthly materiality.

In the "Anacalypsis" we read concerning Maia, the mother of Buddha: "Maia was the female generative power, and as such the mother of Buddha or Divine Wisdom, or the Logos. Thus she was the mother of IHΣ or of Jesus, and still a part of the Deity." Further on we read concerning the nature, or rather the substance, of the Divine Mother as follows: "I am forcibly impressed with the idea that the substance which we call *Hydrogen*, by which is meant a substance which is the base of fire and of water, constituted that which the ancients called *spiritual* fire, and that from this arise the apparent contradictions in the designations of water, fire, and air, as the origin of things—for air, the third, gas is the first product, perhaps, of the union of the two former. Then in what will hydrogen differ from the To Oν? It is not water, though the base of water; it is not *fire*, though the base of fire. It is not *air*, though air arises from the union of its two products—shall I say from the union of the *two emanations* from it? But here we may perceive the corporeal trinity of

Pentateuch; and they also maintain that it was given by God, on Mount Sinai, to Moses, *verbally*, and not written; and this is the doctrine described in the fourth book of Esdras, chapter xiv. 6, 26, and 45, thus:

> "*These words shalt thou declare, and these shalt thou hide. And when thou hast done, some things shalt thou publish, and some things shalt thou show secretly to the* WISE.
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> "*. . . The Highest spake, saying, The first that thou hast written publish openly, that the worthy and the unworthy may read it: but keep the seventy last, that thou mayest deliver them only to such as be* WISE *among the people. For in them is the spring of understanding, the fountain of* WISDOM."

Now, though the book of Esdras be no authority in argument with a Protestant Christian, for any point of doctrine, it may be considered authority in such a case as this. If the Jews had had no secret doctrine, the writer would never have stated such a fact in the face of all his countrymen, who must have known its truth or falsity. No doubt, whatever might be pretended, the real reason of the Kabbala being unwritten was concealment. But the Jews assert that, from the

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Plato. Whence came the baptism of water, fire, and air? From the FIRST (the To Oν, Illusion) emanated the base of hydrogen, whose base was Maia; from Maia, or the base of hydrogen, emanated hydrogen, the base of *fire* and *water*. These first constituted the first Trinity. From these three in one emanated the next Trinity, consisting of fire, water, air or gas, gast or ghost, in their most refined or spiritual forms—three in one, one in three—and from these emanated all beings in existence known to us—all the beings of this our world, perhaps of the Universe, perceptible by us. All this is *ancient doctrine* only put into *modern words*—Gas and Hydrogen; it is the doctrine of Macrobius. I greatly suspect that the electric, the galvanic, the magnetic fluids and hydrogen, are all one substance; that the first *three* are *one*, is, promulgation of the law on Mount Sinai, it was handed down pure as at first delivered. In the same way they maintain that their written law has come to us unadulterated, without a single error. One assertion may be judged of by the other. For of the tradition delivered by memory one question need only be asked: What became of it when priests, kings, and people were all such idolators—viz., before and during the early part of the reign of the good King Josiah—that the Law was completely forgotten—not even known to exist in the world? To obviate this difficulty, in part, the fourth book of Esdras was probably written.

The following passage may serve, at present, as an outline of what was the general nature of the Kabbala:

> "The similarity, or rather the coincidence, of the Cabalistic, Alexandrian, and Oriental philosophy, will be sufficiently evinced by briefly stating the common tenets in which these different systems agreed. They are as follows: 'All things are derived by emanation from one principle, and this principle is God. From

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I believe, a doctrine no longer doubted. Everything in nature was supposed to be microcosmic: thus the second Trinity was a microcosm of the first. And now we come to the most refined of all refinements. As the hypostatic universe was a microcosm of the IMMENSE To Oν, so the minutest animalcule imaginable was a microcosm of the one above it; and thus, when we get to the least particle perceptible by sense, or even in imagination, how can we imagine anything of this kind but by a circle, symbolised by a snake with the tail in its mouth? All nature was a chain of trinities; the third person of the *first*, was the *first* of the second, and so on *ad infinitum*. Thus all Nature was God; thus God was Nature. Thus all matter at last was supposed to be resolved into the To Oν, and thus to be eternal."

Him a substantial power immediately proceeds, which is the image of God, and the source of all subsequent emanations. This second principle sends forth, by the energy of emanation, other natures which are more or less perfect according to their different degrees of distance in the scale of emanation, from the First Source of existence, and which constitute different worlds or orders of being, all united to the eternal power from which they proceed. Matter is nothing more than the most remote effect of the emanative energy of the Deity. The material world receives its form from the immediate agency of powers far beneath the First Great Source of being. Evil is the necessary effect of the imperfection of matter. Human souls are distant emanations from Deity, and after they are liberated from their material vehicles, will return, through various stages of purification, to the fountain whence they first proceeded."—(Dr. Rees' *Encyclopedia*, art. Cabala.)

From this extract the reader will see the nature of the Oriental doctrine of emanations, which, as here given, in most, though not in all, respects, coincides with the Oriental philosophy: and the honest translation given by the Septuagint of Deut. xxxiii. 2—*He shined forth from Paran with thousands of Saints, and, having his angels on his right hand*, proves that the Kabbala was as old, or older, than Moses.

The Ancient Persians believed that the Supreme Being was surrounded with angels, or what they called Æons, or Emanations, from the Divine substance. This was also the opinion of the Manicheans, and of almost all the Gnostic sects of Christians. As might be expected, in the particulars of this complicated system, among the different professors of it, a great variety of opinions arose; but all, at the bottom, evidently of the same nature. These Oriental sects were very much in the habit of using figurative language, under which they concealed their metaphysical doctrines from the eyes of the vulgar. This gave their enemies the opportunity, by construing them literally, of representing them as wonderfully absurd. All these doctrines were also closely connected with judicial astrology.

The science of the Absolute does not rely solely upon occult books for its perpetuation, but upon the absolute Soul. Books do not and cannot impart the Absolute. All they can teach us is the Law of Re-birth, but the operation of that Law is within ourselves. Books contain only reflections, the direct ray is in the Soul.

If there were no other Theosophic book in existence than the Bible, we might, nevertheless, construe the true knowledge of God from the writings of the astute Hebrew Theosophers. "The *beginning*" (of Divine Life) is set forth by Moses in the Creation, "Bereschis"; שית and the Spiritual Re-birth, by Ezekiel, in the vision of the Chariot, called the "Mercaba." Bereschis and Mercaba are thus also twin-kernels of Hebrew Kabbalism, and it is chiefly around these two subjects, or phases of the same subject, that allegory and symbol shed the chaste light of Divine Wisdom. The Apocalypse of Johannes is a prophetic revealment of the Apotheosis of the Soul in the same allegorical manner.

Concerning "*The Beginning*," we read in that rare Book, the "Anacalypsis" of Sir Godfrey Higgins, as follows:

"Perhaps in the languages of the world, no two words have been of greater importance than the first two words in the book of Genesis ב ראשית B-Rasit (for they are properly *two*, not *one* word; and great difference of opinion has arisen among learned men respecting the meaning of them. Grotius renders them, *when first;* Simeon, *before;* Tertullian, *in power;* Rabbi Bechai and Castalio, *in order before all;* Onkelos, the Septuagint, Jonathan ben Uzziel, and the modern translators, *in the beginning.*

! "But the official or accredited and admitted authority of the Jewish religion, the Jerusalem Targum, renders them thus: By Wisdom.

"It may be observed that the Targum of Jerusalem is, or was formerly, the received orthodox authority of the Jews: the other Targums are only the opinions of individuals, and in this rendering the Jewish Cabala and the doctrine of the ancient Gnostics are evident; and it is, as I shall now show, to conceal *this* that Christians have suppressed its true meaning. To the celebrated and learned Beausobre, I am indebted for the most important discovery of the secret doctrine contained in this word. He says: 'The Jews, instead of translating Berasit by the words, *in the beginning*, translate it by *the Principle* (par le Principe) *active and immediate of all things, God made, &c.*, that is to say, according to the Targum of Jerusalem, By Wisdom (Par la Sagesse), God made, &c.' *

"It is said in Proverbs viii. 22, 'Jehovah possessed me,' *Wisdom* ראשית *rasit:* but not בראשית *b-rasit,* which it ought to be, to justify our vulgar translation, which is, 'The Lord possessed me

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* "Il y a encore une réflexion à faire sur cette matière. Elle roule sur l'explication du mot Rasit, qui est à la tête de la Genèse, et qui, si l'on croit d'anciens Interprêtes Juifs, ne signifie par *le commencement,* mais *le Principe* actif et immediat de toutes choses. Ainsi au lieu de traduire, *au commencement* Dieu fit le Ciel et la Terre, ils traduisaient *Dieu fit le Ciel et la Terre* Par le Principe, c'est-a-dire, selon l'explication du *Targum* de Jerusalem, Par la Sagesse: Maimonide soutient, que cette explication est la seule Litterale et Véritable. Elle passe d'abord chez les Chrétiens. On la trouve non seulement dans *Chalcidius,* qui marque qu'elle venait des Hébreux, mais dans *Méthodius* dans Origène, et dans Clement d'Alexandrie, plus ancien que l'un et l'autre."—(Beausobre, Hist. Manich, Liv. vi., chap. i., p. 290.)

In *the beginning.*' The particle ב b, the sign of the ablative case, is wanting; but it is interpolated in our translation to justify the rendering, because it would be nonsense to say the Lord possessed me, *the beginning.*

"According to the Jewish Cabala a number of Sephiroths, being Emanations, issued or flowed from God—of which the chief was *Wisdom.* In Genesis it is said, by *Wisdom* God created or formed, &c. This is evidently the first emanation, MINERVA—the Goddess of *Wisdom*—emanating or issuing from the head of Jove (or Jah or Jehovah), as described on an Etruscan brass plate in the Cabinet of Antiquities at Bologna. This is known to be Etruscan from the names being on the arms of the gods in Etruscan letters, which proves it older than the Romans, or, probably, than the Grecians of Homer.

"The word *Rasit,* as we might expect, is found in the Arabic language, and means, as our Lexicographers, who are the same class of persons that made our Hebrew Lexicons, tell us, *head, chief,* and is used as a term of honour applied to great persons: for instance, Aaron-al-raschid. Al is the emphatic article. Abd-al-raschid, *i.e.,* Abdallah-al-raschid, &c.

"But to return to the word Berasit, or, more properly, the word ראשית *Rasit,* the particle ב *beth* being separated from it. A curious question has arisen among Christian philosophers, whether Time was in existence before the creation here spoken of, or the beginning, if it be so translated. . . . I think the author of Genesis had more philosophy than to write about the *beginning* of the world. I cannot see why so much anxiety should be shown by some modern translators to construe this word as meaning *beginning.* I see clearly enough why others of them should do so, and why the ancient translators did it. They had a preconceived dogma to support, their partiality to which blinded their judgment; and of philosophy they did not possess much. However, it cannot be denied that, either in a primary or secondary sense, the word means *Wisdom* as well as *beginning,* and, therefore, its sense here must be gathered by the context."

"Bereschis" the creation, "Mercaba" the change, the turning of the wheel of Re-birth, and Apocalypsos the consummation, treat essentially one subject in various stages of progression. And that subject is the course of the Soul on its return towards its Divine Source.*

Each writer treats the subject from a different standpoint. The most ancient book of mystic Creation (of the internal world) would be the Sefer Jezira or Book of Formation, if that book is rightly attributed to Abraham. Be that as it may, Moses appears to have added an Hermetic version to a primitive tradition, possibly inculcating therein his own views and experiences, given in Egyptian and Accadian symbols, the latter being probably imparted to him by Jethro.

The writings of Ezekiel, again, show Persian ideas, and modifications from the Zend-Avesta, while in the Apocalypse we have the allegorical manner of the Essenes commingled with the Alexandrian Neo-Hermeticism. (We use the word advisedly in preference to Neo-Platonism.)

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* "Our book which we call Genesis, or the generations, ought to be Barasit—that is, Wisdom—that is, Veda or Buddha. Thus it is called by the Jews. In the Veda was recorded all knowledge—past, present, and future—the knowledge of the generations or regenerations of the soul, the knowledge of the renewal of cycles *in sæculum sæculorum*, or cycles of cycles—the esoteric meaning of *sæculum sæculorum*, or αιων Τωναιωνων, æons, emanations of Divine Wisdom. . . . The tree of knowledge (*i.e.* Wisdom) produced twelve fruits, one for each month. (The twelve Neroses or ages were believed to make a cycle with the time of precession in the twelve signs). All countries have the general mythos of the avatars to finish at the end of six thousand years, and to begin again, and be renewed *in sæculum sæculorum*. A perfect man, if such a one could be found in the flesh, must be a perfect Buddhist, a perfect Jew, a perfect Christian, a perfect Mohammedan. They are all Χρης or Χρης-οι or Christs. ("All Christians were first called Christs."—*Bingham.*) And from the most remote antiquity a man in every new cycle has been looked for, who should be in a peculiar manner Χρης, to teach glad tidings, divine wisdom, to mankind."—("Anacalypsis" II., page 251.)

Thus there are actually diverse schools of Theosophy represented in that most venerable book of books, the Bible, that is so popularly known, yet so little understood.

The system of Theosophy, called the Kabbala, has been divided into the *symbolical* and the *real.* The *symbolical* Kabbala, sub-divided into Gematria, Notaricon and Temura, is intended as an exercise to concentrate the mind upon the mysteries of numbers (Gematria), letters (Notaricon), and of language (Temura). Thus compelling the mind to brood in an intellectual world of its own, and drawing it away from the gross sensual world by causing it to dwell upon an infinitude of transpositions and transmutations of letters, computations of words, to each of which was attached some occult idea and similar ingenious subtilities, of which authentic account and practical instructions are given in our Volume, "*Occult Texts*," viz.: "A Rabbinical Explanation of thirteen methods employed by the Kabbalists to discover the highest mysteries of the Law."

The *real* Kabbala is either theoretical or practical. The theoretical Kabbala treats of the ten Sephiroth, the thirty-two pathways of wisdom, the four worlds, the names of God, of angels, of the celestial Hierarchy (or in brief of the Divine Ideas) with their internal relation and influence upon the lower world. This part of the

Kabbala is divided, as we have said, into Bereschis and Mercaba, treating respectively of the spiritual creation, and the Divine Influx, and taking sequentially the first two chapters of Genesis and the symbolical visions of Ezekiel as text for its esoteric doctrine. This part treats also of the Soul, and the various good and evil spirits, their degrees, offices, &c.

The practical Kabbala teaches Theurgy by an application, concentration and exaltation of the mind, on the truths of the Occult Doctrine. One must *be*, in order to be able to *do*, and as there are so few who are in the Divine state, it is not surprising that a goetic degeneration has, among the illiterate modern Kabbalists, taken the place of the Divine manifestation.

Again we give the Principles of Kabbalistic Philosophy, which we find briefly summarized, in the "Introduction to Hebrew Literature," as follows:—

"1. From nothing nothing can proceed. 2. Therefore no substance that now exists has been produced from nothing, and whatever exists is, in one sense, uncreated. 3. All existing substances are emanations from one eternal substance. In the act of what is commonly called 'Creation,' the Eternal Being drew from Himself. 4. Consequently there is no such thing as matter; strictly speaking, that which we call 'matter' is only a form or species under which spirit gives itself a manifestation. 5. So that the Universe is a revelation of the Infinite; an immanent effect of his ever active power and presence. 6. But though all existence thus flowed from the Divinity, yet is the world different from the Godhead, as the effect is different from the cause. Nevertheless, as not separate from, but abiding immanently in Him, it is evermore the manifestation of Himself. It is the mantle with which He clothes Himself; or, rather, it is a revelation of the Godhead, not in His hidden essence, but in His visible glory. 7. In giving existence to the Universe, the first act of the Almighty was the production of a power or principle intimately and especially relating to Himself, to which are given the names of 'His Holy Spirit,' 'His personal Word,' and 'His First-begotten Son,' and which the Kabbalists personify as the 'Adam Kadmon,' the heavenly or archetypal man, who, in His turn, caused to proceed, by emanation from Himself, all the lower forms of actual existence in their several descending gradations.

"We see here, in effect, a philosophic system essentially the same, though with different circumstantials, with that which has been reproduced in modern times by Spinoza and Hegel. Why need we use many words? The principles of the Kabbala may be summed up in one, and that one,—PANTHEISM.

"Some of the later Kabbalists have attempted to obviate this conclusion. But if the verdict be reserved for common sense or logic to pronounce, the sentence will be irreversible. This character of the system appears partially in the Jetsira and more fully in the Zohar."—(*Etheridge.*)

The Sephiroth are alluded to, and traceable in the books of Enoch, Ezekiel, and Daniel. Also in the Lord's Prayer, three Sephiroth, Malchus, Gebura and Haud are mentioned. "For thine is the Kingdom (Malchus) the Power (Gebura) and Glory (Haud) for ever and aye." The "thine" refers to the Divine Soul, the Crown (Kether), or the God within us.

On these subjects of Kabbalistic doctrines the eminent Hebraist, Etheridge, gives interesting details, of which we give a short quotation, referring the reader for further information, besides the already cited books, to the Kabbala Denudata, and the Latin Collection of Pistorius.

"Before all time the *En-Soph,* the Unoriginated and Infinite Being, existed without likeness or reflection, incomprehensible, unknowable. In the production of finite existence, by which he became knowable, the first act was the evolution of the *Memra* or 'Word' (*feminine*), of whom they speak as the primary point in the descending series of being, and from whom, in nine other degrees of manifestation, emanated those forms which at once compose the universe, and express the attributes and presence of its eternal Ruler.

"To these ten forms of manifestation the *Zohar* gives the common name of *sefiroth*. This term some critics consider to be equivalent to the Greek *sfairai*, or 'spheres;' but others deriving it from *saphir*, make it to denote 'splendours,' the favourite term with Basnage, and writers of his class. But probably the more correct notion is, that which explains it as the plural of *sefar*, 'a number;' the evolution of numbers out of an original unity being one of the dogmatic modes of illustrating the doctrine of emanation by the Kabbalists. In the book *Jetsira*, the ten numbers answer to the elementary world and its categories. The sum of them is the universe itself, the manifestation of God. But in the *Zohar* the *sefiroth* are unfolded with greater amplitude than in the *Jetsira*; or rather the things symbolized in the *Jetsira* by the numbers, are in the *Zohar* described with various accessories, and presented under other names. No longer indicated by the naked numbers, they are clothed, so to speak, with the more imposing grandeur of moral appellations. Here their several titles are, 1. *Kethar*, 'the crown;' 2. *Hachma*, 'wisdom;' 3. *Binah*, 'understanding;' 4. *Chesed*, 'mercy;' 5. *Din* (or *Gebura*) 'justice' (or strength); 6. *Tifereth*, 'beauty;' 7. *Netsach*, 'triumph;' 8. *Hod*, 'glory;' 9. *Yasod*, 'basis;' 10. *Malkuth*, 'dominion.' These names are associated in Christian theology with intellectual and moral realities; but in the Kabbala they are applied as well to physical phenomena, because such phenomena are manifestations, of the Great Being in whose character the virtues expressed by this nomenclature are for ever inherent.*

"The Primordial Essence is before all. In His abstract and eternal condition He is utterly incomprehensible, and, as an object of the understanding, according to the *Zohar*, He is as nothing; the Mystery of Mysteries, the Concealed of all Concealments. But He took a FORM as He called forth the all. 'The Ancient of Ancients is now seen in His own light: that light is His holy name.'

"The ten Sefiroth through which He has revealed Himself, become attributes or predicates of His nature. In them the Divine discovers itself; and, taken together, they make the fullest of all manifestations of it. This revelation of the Divine attributes, the *Zohar* personifies as 'the heavenly Man,' *Adam Ilah,* the 'man on high,' an allusion to Ezekiel i. 26; and *Adam Kadmon,* the primeval Adam, of whom the earthly Adam was an image, as being in himself a microcosm. The heavenly Man, the *Logos,* developing Himself in the ten Sefiroth, is the absolute form of all being."

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* The Sephirotic plan according to Doctor Pancost's work on the Kabbala, appearing in our "*Occult Texts*," is well worthy of earnest study.

The Theosophy of the Hebrews was already well developed anterior to the times of Christ, and it was that very esoteric doctrine which is so nearly Christian, and which, in fact, is nearest to Esoteric Christianity, that prepared the way for Christ. No one can read Philo the Jew, without being struck with the similarity of his views with those of the early Christian Esoterist Origen; and no one can compare the sayings of the Hebrew Fathers without being compelled to acknowledge that many of them are almost identical with those enunciated by Jesus and his Apostles. Even orthodox Judaism has, in a measure, a Theosophic aspect, but before we quote that venerable authority Maimonides, and as probably very few of our readers are acquainted with that text-book of the Hebrew Kabbala—the Zohar,—we would give as an example of Hebrew Kabbalism, a fragment from the Preface of that Occult work, there entitled:—

"THE INITIATION OF RABBI KHIJA."

" . . . And Rabbi Khija threw himself unto the earth, he kissed the dust, wept and said: Earth, earth, how art thou so daring; how canst thou be so hardy. Every visual pleasure perisheth with thee—thou devourest and scatterest the shining pillars of the world! Ha! how daring! The holy beacon shining throughout the world, the exalted shield, the Lord of Salvation, the preserver of the world to perish in thee! Rabbi Simeon Ben Jochai the splendour of light, the beacon of the world to perish in thee! How? art thou for ever to rule the world?—Thereon he reflected for a moment and cried: Earth! earth! do not exalt thyself, the pillars of the world are not left to thee, no, Rabbi Simeon does not perish in thee!

"Then Rabbi Khija arose again, wept and went forth, and Rabbi Jose followed him. From this day he forthwith fasted forty days to prepare himself for beholding Rabbi Simeon. But they said unto him: thou art not yet worthy to behold him. He wept, and again fasted forty days more. At last he had a vision wherein he beheld Rabbi Simeon and his son Rabbi Eleazar, and they exhausted *that* subject of which Rabbi Jose had spoken, and many thousands hearkened thereto. And lo he suddenly beheld the heavenly hosts, the high and exalted ones, and with them Rabbi Simeon and his son Rabbi Eleazar ascended to the celestial school, and celestial hosts all hastened to meet them. And he beheld that they became renewed and transfigured and their splendours surpassed the sun.

"And Rabbi Simeon began: Rabbi Khija may come and behold what the blessed Holy One has prepared to rejoice the face of the perfect in the future state. Blessed is he who without fear enters thereon even here below, and blessed he who stands in this world firm as a pillar. And he beheld as he entered, that Rabbi Eleazar and all the exalted ones that were there arose from their seats. Thereat he became abashed and retraced his steps and sat down at the feet of Rabbi Simeon. And a voice was heard calling: 'Cast down thine eyes, lift not up thy head, and look not about thee.' Thereupon he cast down his eyes and beheld a light shining in the distance. But the voice began again as before, and said: 'The exalted, the occult and invisible with searching eyes pass through all worlds and consider those of the lower world whose senses are enchained by sleep. O awake ye! Who among you can change darkness into Light, bitterness into sweetness, before attaining to this? Who among you daily desires the light—that shines at the moment when God calls forth the morning star—that he may adore the king of kings. He who does not daily look for this while in the world below shall have no part in the celestial world.'

"Thereupon he beheld many links were encircling all those high-reaching pillars, and he saw they had aspirationally ascended to that celestial school, some ascending, others descending, and above all mounted the head of the heavenly hosts and pronounced the solemn oath that had been imparted to him in the hall of the mystery: May the king avenge and remember the faith that lies in the dust.—At this moment he shakes the three hundred and ninety spheres, and all therein trembled before him, and thereat he sheds tears, and these tears fall red-hot like fire into the great sea, and of these tears is born the ruler of the sea, and he maintains himself and blesses the name of the holy king and promises to inhale all his waters from the beginning, and to limit them in himself, in that moment when all nations unite with the holy people, that the waters may be dried up and they may pass through dry shod. Thereupon a voice was heard, calling: 'Clear the place, clear the place, the anointed king appears in the school of Rabbi Simeon!'—For all the perfect are in that world chiefs of schools and the schools are there distinguished accordingly, and all the Brethren of each school ascend from the school below to the school above. The anointed then comes into all these schools, and closes there the enlightening doctrine, that outpours from the lips of the sages. At this moment appears the anointed and he is crowned by the chiefs of the schools with celestial crowns.—Now all the Brethren arose from their seats and also Rabbi Simeon arose, and his glory rayed unto the heights of the celestial dome. Thereat said he: 'Blessed art thou Rabbi, thy exalted doctrine ascends in three hundred and seventy rays of light and each ray divides itself in six hundred and thirteen reflections; they ascend and bathe in pure streams of balm. And the blessed Holy One Himself keeps the doctrine of thy school as of the school of Hezekiah, king of Juda, and of the school of Achia the Salonite—to me it was not entrusted, but the Lord of Hosts was destined for it, for I know he comes into no other school but thine.'

"Thereupon Rabbi Simeon whispered to him the oath that had been imparted to him by the Lord of Hosts. Thereat the Anointed was amazed and cried out, and the heavens trembled and the ocean raged and the Leviathan feared, and it seemed as though the world would perish. As he perceived Rabbi Khija at the feet of Simeon, he cried: 'Who invests here a mortal with the garment of immortality?' And Rabbi Simeon said; 'It is Rabbi

Khija, a ray of light from the beacon of the Law.' Thereupon he continued: 'Then may he and his be accepted in thy school.' And Rabbi Simeon said: 'Let a time of probation be given to him.' He went away profoundly agitated and tears streamed from his eyes. With broken heart and weeping said Rabbi Khija: 'Blessed are the perfect who have part in that world, and blessed the son of Jochai who has acquired this.' Thereat points the text: 'My friends inherit real good and I fill their treasures.'"*

We will now proceed to give some selections from that Gem of Antiquity, the "Yad Hachazakah; or, Mishne Torah of Moses Maimonides," justly styled by the Rabbis the Great Eagle of Doctors. In the first Book termed, "Sefer Hamada, The Book of Knowledge," we read as follows:—

"The foundation of foundations, and the prop of wisdom is to know that there exists a first Being, and that He called all other beings into existence, and that all things existing from heaven to earth, and whatever is between them, exist only through the essentiality of His existence; so that if we were to suppose that He did not exist, no other thing could exist; again, were we to suppose that all other things existing, beside Himself, did not exist, He Himself would still exist, and would not cease because of their non-existence; since all things existing stand in need of Him, but He, blessed be He! does not stand in need of them, not even of any one of them. His essentiality, therefore, is not like the truth of any one of them. Thus the prophet says: *But the Eternal is the* TRUE *God* (Jer. x. 10), indicating that He alone is essential truth, and that there belongs to no other being a truth like His truth. The same is also expressed in the law: *There is none else* (Deut. iv. 39), that is to say, there is not a being, beside Himself, who as to essentiality is like Him.

"This Being is the God of the Universe, the Sovereign of the whole earth; and it is He who guides the orb with a power to which there is neither end or limit—with a power, of which there is no interruption; for the orb revolves continually, and it is impossible that it should revolve without some one causing it to revolve; and it is He, blessed be He! who causes it to revolve, without a hand and without a body (*i.e.*, without physical effort).

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* Proverbs vii. 21.

"Now the recognition of this matter is an affirmative commandment, for it is said: *I am the Lord thy God* (Exod. xx. 2); and every one who entertains the opinion that there is another God besides this, transgresses a negative commandment, for it is said: *Thou shalt have no other Gods before Me* (Exod. xx. 3); and he at the same time denies the radical religious principle,* for this is the great religious principle upon which everything depends.

"This God is one—not two, nor more than two, but absolutely One—whose unity is not like the unity of any one of the individuals existing in the universe—not one as a kind, for this would include many individuals; nor one as a body, for this would be divisible into parts and portions; but a unity like unto which there is no other existing in the universe.†

"Were there many Deities they would needs be bodies and frames, since things that can be numbered, which are equal in their essence, are distinguishable one from another only by the accidental qualities which belong to bodies or frames; now were the Creator a body or frame, He would have an end and a limit; for it is impossible that there should be a body which has not an end; and of everything that has an end and a limit, its power must likewise have an end and a limit.

"But as to our God, blessed be His name! since His power has no end, and is never interrupted (for behold! the orb revolves continually); His power is not the power of a body; and since He is not a body, He is not subject to any events incident to body, so that He could be separated and divided from another. Therefore it is not possible that He should be other than One; and the recognition of this matter is a positive commandment, for it is said: *The Lord our God is* ONE *God* (Deut. vi. 4).

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* *Talmud. Treatise Maccoth*, 24 *a*.

† Why does not the "Eagle of Doctors" give us here a definition of the *true unity* of God, as portrayed or symbolized in the Sacred Triangle, and consisting of three Divine PRINCIPLES—viz., Male, Female, and Proceeding, or uniting? or, as the Christian Mystics have it—Love, Wisdom, and Truth; or the Word (Logos) at once God, and the manifestation of God?—M. C.

"Behold! it is plainly stated in the law and in the Prophets that the Holy One, blessed be He! is not a body or frame; for it is said: *That the Lord He is God in heaven above, and upon the earth beneath* (Deut iv. 39); but a body cannot be in two places [at the same time]. Again it is said: *For ye saw no manner of similitude* (Deut. iv. 15); and it is also said: *To whom then will ye compare me, that I should be like Him?* (Isaiah xl. 25), now if He were a body, He might be comparable to other bodies.

"But how is this reconcilable with the Scriptural passages? what means this which is written in the law: *And there was under His* FEET (Exod. xxiv. 10); *Written with the* FINGER *of God* (Exod. xxxi. 18); *The* HAND *of the Lord* (Exod. ix. 3); *The* EYES *of the Lord* (Deut. xi. 12); *The* EARS *of the Lord* (Numb. xi. 18); and other expressions like these? The answer is: all these terms are used with reference to the intellectual capacity of the sons of men, who can comprehend only corporeal beings; the law, therefore, speaks in human language, and all these are merely epithets, just as we read: *If I whet my glittering sword* (Deut. xxxii. 41); for has He then a sword? or does He slay with a sword? certainly not, this is only a parable; and thus all is parabolical.

"As a proof of this we may adduce the words of one prophet, who said, that he saw the Holy One, blessed be He! *whose garment was as white as snow* (Dan. vii. 9); whilst another saw him *with red garments* (Isaiah lxiii. 1). Moses our Teacher himself saw Him upon the sea, like a warrior making war in battle, and upon Sinai, like the messenger of a congregation wrapped in prayer; showing that He had neither similitude nor form, but that all this was only in an appearance of Prophecy, and in a vision. But the essentiality of the object the human intellect cannot comprehend, nor attain unto, nor search out; and this is what the Scripture says: *Canst thou dive into the foundation of God? or canst thou find out the intent or aim of the Almighty?* (Job. xi. 7).

"What then was that which Moses our Teacher sought to attain when he said: *I beseech Thee shew me Thy glory* (Exod. xxxiii. 18)? He sought to know the essentiality of the existence of the Holy One, blessed be He! to that degree that it should be known to his mind in the same way as he would know any person whose countenance he had seen, and whose form was engraven upon his memory—so that that man is distinguished in his mind from other men;—in the same way Moses our Teacher sought to have the essence of the Holy One, blessed be He! distinguished in his mind from the essences of other beings; so that He might know the essentiality of His existence just as it is. But the Holy One, blessed be He! returned answer to him, that it was not in the power of the intellect of living man, composed of body and soul, distinctly to attain unto the truth of this matter. . . . .

"With regard to this glorious and awful God—we are commanded to love Him, and to fear Him, for it is said: *And thou shalt* LOVE *the Lord thy God* (Deut. vi. 5), and it is also said: *Thou shalt* FEAR *the Lord thy God* (Deut. vi. 13). 2. But which is the way leading to love and fear Him?—At the time when one contemplates His works and His wonderful and stupendous creations, and perceives from them His wisdom, which is incomparable and unbounded, immediately he loves,* praises, and glorifies, and longs with great eagerness to know that great God, just as David said: *My soul thirsteth for God, for the living God* (Psalm xlii. 2).

"Also when one reflects upon these very things, immediately he starts back, and is afraid, and feels terror,† and is conscious that he is a creature, small, insignificant, and dark, standing with only a slight and scanty knowledge, before Him who is perfect in knowledge, as David said: *When I consider Thy heavens, the work of Thy fingers* (Psalm viii. 3); *What is man that Thou art mindful of Him?* (Psalm viii. 4). Now, with reference to these things, I am about to explain some great principles, taught by the work of the Lord of the Universe, in order that they may be an opening to the intelligent man to love God, consonant with the words of the sages regarding love: 'That thereby thou mayest know Him who spake [the word], and the Universe existed.'

"All the things which the Holy One, blessed be He! has created in His Universe, are divisible into three classes. Some are creatures composed of matter and form; and which are perpetually coming into existence, and perishing. Such are the bodies of men, of beasts, of plants, and of minerals. Some again are creatures composed of matter and form, yet they do not change from body to body, and from form to form like the former; but their form is fixed in their matter for ever, so that they are not liable to change like the others. Such are the orbs and the stars which are in them. Moreover, their matter is not like the matter of other things, nor their form like other forms. Again, there are creatures possessing form, but no matter at all. Such are the Angels, for the Angels are not bodies or frames, but forms distinguished one from another.

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* Siphri, Deut. c. vi., v. 6.

† *Talmud. Treatise Sabbath,* 31 *b.*

"What, then, is the sense of the Prophets saying: That they saw an angel of fire, and having wings? All this is conceived, in prophetic vision, and by way of allegory, in order to express that he (the angel) is not a body, nor possessing heaviness, as heavy bodies, as it is said: *For the Lord thy God is a consuming fire* (Deut. iv. 24), now since he is not a fire, the expression must be taken figuratively, as it is said: *He maketh the spirits His angels, His ministers a flaming fire* (Psalm civ. 4).

"By what then are these forms distinguished one from another, seeing that they are not bodies? It is because they are not equal in their essence, but one stands a degree lower than his fellow in succession, so that each exists through the power of the one immediately above him; but all of them exists through the power and the goodness of the Holy One, blessed be He! And this it is to which Solomon in his wisdom alludes, when he says: *For He that is higher than the highest regardeth* (Eccles. v. 7).

"When we say: '*Beneath the degree of his fellow*,' we do not mean the degree of place, as would be said of a man who sits higher than his fellow, but as it would be said of two wise men of whom one is greater than the other in wisdom, that the former is above the degree of the latter; or as it would be said, with respect to the cause, that it is above the effect.

"There is a variety in the names of the angels depending upon their degrees; and thence they are called *Haïoth Hakkodesh* (the holy living creatures), which are the highest of all; *Ophanim* (the wheels); *Erellim* (the ambassadors); *Hashmallim* (those that are of great brightness); *Seraphim* (those that are of burning fire); *Malachim* (the messengers); *Elohim* (gods, or those that possess great power); *Benay-Elohim* (the sons of God); *Cherubim* (those who have the appearance of little children), and *Ishim* (men).* All these ten names by which the Angels are called, are [given] in respect of their ten degrees, and that degree, to which there is no degree superior but the degree of God, blessed be He! is the degree of that Intelligence called *Haïoth*. On this account it is said in the Prophecy: 'that they are [immediately] under the throne of glory.' Also the tenth degree is the degree of that Intelligence which is called *Ishim* (men), these being the Angels which spoke with the Prophets, and were seen by them in prophetic vision; therefore they are called *Ishim* (men), because their degree is next to the degree of the knowledge of the sons of men.

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* *Talmud. Treatise Chagigah,* 12 *b.*

"Now all these Intelligences are alive, and can discern the Creator, and they know Him with an exceedingly great knowledge; each Intelligence in proportion to its degree, not in proportion to its size. However, even the first degree cannot arrive at the essence of the Creator such as it really is; because the knowledge even of the first degree being too limited to arrive at and to know that essence; but yet it attains unto and knows more than that which the Intelligence beneath it can attain and know. And thus also every degree, even to the tenth, knows the Creator with a knowledge which the power of the sons of men, who are composed of matter and form, cannot attain unto and know; none, however, know the Creator as perfectly as He knows Himself.

"All things existing, beside the Creator, from the first degree of Intelligences to the smallest insect which may be found in the centre of the earth—all these exist by the power of His truth. And because He knows Himself, and can discern His own greatness and His glory and His truth—He knows everything, and nothing is concealed from Him.

"The Holy One, blessed be He! perceives His own essentiality, and knows it just as it really is. And He does not know with a knowledge distinct from Himself, as we know; because we and our knowledge are not one, but, as to the Creator, may He be blessed! He, His knowledge, and His life are one, in every possible respect, and in every mode of Unity; seeing that if He were living with a life, and knowing with a knowledge distinct from Himself, there would be many Deities, viz., He, His life, and His knowledge. But this is not the fact, but on the contrary, He is one in every possible respect, and in every mode of Unity.

"Hence you may say: that He is the knower, the *known*, and *knowledge itself*, all at once. Now this idea the mouth has not the power of expressing, nor the ear of perceiving, nor the human mind of perfectly comprehending; and on this account it is said: *By the* LIVES *of Pharaoh* (Gen. xlii. 15), *By the* LIVES *of* *thy soul* (Sam. i. 26, and in many other places). It is not however said *By the* LIVES *of the Lord*, but *By the* LIFE *of the Lord* (Judg. viii. 19, and in many other places); because the Creator and His life are not two, as are the lives of living bodies, or the lives of Angels. Therefore He does not perceive creatures and know them, by means of the creatures, as we know them; but He knows them, by means of Himself; so that, by dint of His knowing Himself, He knows everything; because everything is supported by its existing through Him. That which we have said on this subject, in these two Chapters, is as a drop of the ocean in comparison with what ought to be explained under this head. Moreover, the explanation of all the radical principles, contained in these two Chapters, is called the *work of the Chariot*, in reference to the description of the vision of the chariot in the vision of Ezekiel, chap. 1.

"The* sages of old have directed, that no one shall expound these subjects except to a single person, who also must be wise and intelligent by his own knowledge; and after that, we may only give him the outlines; and convey to him mere hints on the subject; and he being intelligent by his own knowledge, may become acquainted with the end and depth of the matter.

"Now these things are exceedingly profound, and not every intellect is capable of sustaining them, wherefore Solomon in his wisdom says respecting them, by way of parable: **Kebusim Lilbushecha**, *The Lambs* [*are*] *for thy clothing* (Prov. xxvii. 26). So the sages say as an explanation to this parable: *the things which are the* MYSTERY *of the Universe, let them be* **Filushecha** *as a garment to thee;* meaning, [let them be kept] to thyself alone, and do not discuss them before many people. Thus also he (Solomon) says respecting them: *Let them be only thine own, and not strangers with thee* (Prov. v. 17). Again with respect to them he says: *Honey and milk* [*are*] *under thy tongue*, (Song of Songs, iv. 11); which the sages of old explain in this manner: *The things which are like honey and milk ought to be under thy tongue.* . . . .

"You can never see matter without form, nor form without matter, and it is only the understanding of man which abstractedly parts the existing body, and perceives that it is composed of matter and form; and also perceives that there are bodies, the matter of which is composed of four elements, and that again there are bodies, the matter of which is simple, and consists only of one matter. And as to those Intelligences which have no matter at all —these cannot be perceived by the eye, but are perceived only by the mind's eye, in the same manner as we know the Lord of All, though not by the sight of the eye.

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* *Talmud Treatise Chagigah*, 11 *b*.

"The Soul of all flesh is the quality thereof, given to it by God; moreover the superior knowledge, which is found in the soul of man, is the quality of man, who is perfect in his knowledge; and it is with regard to this quality that it is said in the law: *Let us make man in* OUR IMAGE, AFTER OUR LIKENESS (Gen. i. 26), meaning, that he (man) should be possessed of that quality which is able to know and to comprehend those Intelligences that have no matter like angels, who have a form without matter, and thus be similar to them. This however does not apply to that form which may be perceived by the eye, as for instance, the mouth, the nose, the cheek bones, or the other features of the body, for this is expressed by **Toar** SHAPE; nor does it refer to the life which is found in every creature possessing animal life, by which it eats, drinks, propagates, feels and reflects; but it refers to that knowledge only which constitutes the quality of the soul, and it is of the QUALITY OF THE SOUL that Scripture says 'IN OUR IMAGE, AFTER OUR LIKENESS.' Now this quality is very often called **Nephesh** SOUL, and also **Ruach** SPIRIT; men therefore ought to be very careful with regard to these expressions, so as not to confound them; and they must learn to know the true meaning of every such expression from its context.

"This quality of the soul is not composed of the elements, so that it ever could be again decomposed into them; nor does it proceed from the power of breath of life, so that it should stand in need of the breath of life in the same manner as the breath of life stands in need of the body; but it proceeds from the Lord—from Heaven; therefore when the matter, which is composed of the elements, becomes decomposed, and when the breath of life also perishes (for this can exist no otherwise than with the body, and stands in need of the body, in all its functions), that quality is nevertheless not destroyed, because it does not in its functions stand in need of the breath of life, but continues to know and to comprehend those Intelligences that are distinct from all matter, and also to know the Creator of all things; and it lasts for ever and ever. This is what Solomon said in his wisdom: *Then shall the dust return to the earth as it was, and the spirit shall return unto God who gave it* (Eccles. xii. 7).

"All the things that we have said respecting this matter are like a drop of a bucket; these things being profound, but yet not so profound as in the matter treated upon in the first and second Chapters. Now the explanation of these things, which are treated upon in the third and fourth Chapters, is called **Cosmogony Maasei Bereshith**, and thus the sages of old have directed,* that even these things must not be expounded publicly, and it is only to an individual that these things may be made known and taught.

"But then what difference is there between the subject relating to the **Maasei Mercabah** *description of the Chariot*, and the subject relating to **Maasei Bereshith Cosmogony**? It is this, namely, that on the subject relating to the *description of the Chariot* we must not expound even to one person,† unless he be wise and of a penetrating intellect, and even then we are only to convey the outlines to him; whereas in subjects relating to **Cosmogony** we may instruct one single person, though he could not reach it by his own knowledge; moreover we may make known to him all that he is able to know of these matters. And why may we not teach it in public? Because every man has not a mind extensive enough perfectly to comprehend all the interpretations and explanations requisite for these matters.

"At the time when a man reflects on these things, and knows all the creatures, whether they be angels, orbs, or men, or the like, and sees the wisdom of the Holy One, blessed be He! in all the things formed and created, he increases in his love to the Omnipresent, his soul thirsts, and his flesh longs to love God, blessed be He! moreover he stands in awe, and is terrified ‡ on account of his lowness, his destitution and his insignificance, when comparing himself to one of those sacred and great bodies, and so much more when comparing himself to one of those pure Intelligences which are distinct from all matter, and composed of no matter whatever; as then he finds himself to be a vessel full of shame and ignominy, destitute and needy.

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* *Treatise Hagigah*, 11 *a*.

† *Treatise Hagigah*, 12 *b*.

‡ *Treatise Sabbath*, 31 *b*.

"Now the subject treated upon in these four Chapters, as comprehending these five* commandments, is that which was called by the sages of old Pardés, *The Garden;* † so they said: *Four* men *have entered the Garden.* Now although these were great men in Israel, and also very wise men, still all of them had not the power of knowing and comprehending these matters to perfection. I am, however, of opinion, that it would not be advisable to perambulate in the garden, viz., to indulge in metaphysical studies, except after having taking substantial food, viz., having previously become fully acquainted with the knowledge of the lawful and unlawful, and similar practical laws. Now although these things were called by the sages *minor things,* for behold! the sages say: 'A great thing is *the description of the Chariot,* and minor things are *discussions like those of Abajah* ‡ *and Ravah,*' yet the latter are entitled to precedence, inasmuch as they tend to calm the mind of man, and as they are also the great benefit which the Holy One, blessed be He! has bounteously conferred upon the habitable globe, to the end that they may inherit the life of the world that is to come; moreover these every one may know, small and great, man and woman, he that has an extensive mind, and he that has a limited mind. . . . .

"The good which is treasured up for the righteous, consists in the life of the world that is to come; a life exempt from death; and a good, unalloyed by evil. This is, which is expressed in the Divine Law: *That it may be well with thee, and that thou mayest prolong thy days* (Deut. xxii. 7). Tradition interprets: *That it may be well with thee*—in that world which is altogether good; *and that thou mayest prolong thy days*—in that world which is prolonged for ever.

"Now the reward of the righteous, consists in their attaining this bliss, and enjoying this felicity; again the retribution which awaits the wicked is in their not attaining eternal life, but that they are to be cut off and die. Moreover he who does not merit that life, is virtually dead, who is never to live again, seeing that he is to be cut off in consequence of his wickedness, and perish like a beast. Now this is the nature of *excision* recorded in the Divine law, when it says: *That Soul shall utterly be cut off* (Numb. xv. 31); Tradition explains: *to be cut off*, implies, *from this world; shall be cut off*, implies, *from the world that is to come;* signifying, that the soul, after departing from the body in this world, does not merit the life of the world that is to come, but is to be entirely cut off therefrom.

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* Namely the first five Commandments, enumerated in the Original Work at the head of the Book of Knowledge, and which are treated upon in the first four Chapters. These are 1st, To know that there is a God. 2dly, Not to imagine that there is another God beside the Lord. 3dly, To be aware of His Unity. 4thly, To love Him. 5thly, To stand in awe of Him.

† *Treatise Hagigah,* 14.

‡ *Treatise Succah,* 28 *a.*

"Whenever the expression **Nephesh**, *Soul*, is here made use of, it does not refer to *the breath* of life which the body requires, but to the *quality* of the Soul, namely to that *intelligence* which comprehends as much of the Creator as it is in its power, and which also comprehends those intelligences that are distinct from matter, as well as all other things created. So that it is that *quality*, the nature of which we have explained in the fourth Chapter of the *Precepts relating to the foundation of the law*, which in this instance, goes by the name of **Nephesh**, *Soul*.

"That life (*i.e.* the life hereafter), because not subject to death (seeing that death is one of the incidents which can befall the body only, and that no body exists in that life), is called *the treasure of life*, as it is said: *But the Soul of my lord shall be bound in the treasure of life* (1 Sam. xxv. 29), alluding to that reward, than which there can be no greater, and that bliss, beyond which there is no higher. It is that state of blissful life which all the prophets so eagerly desired.

"Various names were given by way of allegory to that life, as for instance, *The mountain of the Lord; His holy place; The way of holiness; The courts of the Lord; The Beauty of the Lord; The tabernacle of the Lord; The temple of the Lord; The house of the Lord, and the gate of the Lord.* The sages by way of allegory called that good which is prepared for the righteous, **Seudah**, *the feast;* but more generally they call it: **Olam Habba**, *the world to come*. . . . . . .

"That bliss already described as awaiting the righteous in the life hereafter will perchance be slighted by you, imagining, that the reward for one's fulfilling the Divine commandments, and for being perfect in the way of truth, consists in eating dainty food and drinking delicious beverages, in being arrayed in raiment of fine linen and embroidered work, in dwelling in pavilions of ivory, and in having for his use vessels of silver and gold, or similar luxuries, as those ignorant Arabs imagine, who are plunged in sensuality. But now, wise and intelligent men know that all these things are idle, vain, and futile; and that if with us, in this world, they are considered as something desirable, it is only because we consist of bodies and frames, and because all these things are cravings of the body, so that the Soul neither longs after, nor wishes for them, but inasmuch as they are craved by the body, namely, for the realisation of its desires, to the end that the body may be preserved in a perfect state. But at a time when there will be no body (*i.e.* no corporal existence), all these things must needs become vain.

" With regard however to that great bliss which the Soul is to attain in the world to come—there is no possibility of comprehending or of knowing the same whilst in this world; seeing that here beneath, we are sensible of that only which is good for the body, and to which also our wishes are confined; but with respect to the celestial bliss, it is exceedingly great, that all earthly good can bear no comparison with the same, except by way of figure. So that truly to estimate the happiness of the Soul in the world to come, by the happiness of the body in this world, as for instance, eating or drinking, is utterly impossible; that celestial happiness being so unsearchably great, that it can admit of no comparison or simile. This is what David expresses, in exclaiming: *Oh, how great is thy goodness, which thou hast treasured up for them that fear Thee, &c.* (Ps. xxxi. 19).

" Verily, how fervently did David long and pant for future life; for it is said: *I had fainted, unless I had believed to see the goodness of the Lord in the land of the living* (Ps. xxvii. 13). The sages of old have already informed us, that with respect to future bliss, it is not in the power of man to comprehend it unto perfection, and that no one knows its excellency, beauty, and nature, save the Holy One, blessed be He! alone; moreover, that all the good happiness which the prophets predicted for Israel, related only to bodily matters, such as the Israelites are to enjoy in the days of our King the Messiah, namely, at the time when the rulership shall be restored to Israel; but that with regard to the bliss of the life of the world that is to come—seeing that this cannot admit of comparison or simile—the prophets never attempted to represent the same by any simile, lest they should thereby depreciate it. This is what Isaiah said: *Neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him* (Isai. lxiv. 4); signifying the bliss such as not even the eye of a prophet hath beheld, and such as no one hath seen but God Himself, hath He prepared for the man that waiteth for Him. So also the sages said: All the prophets predicted only concerning the events to happen at the days of the Messiah; but as to the world that is to come—NEITHER HATH THE EYE SEEN, O GOD, BESIDE THEE.

"Now, the reason why the sages called it **Olam Habba**, *the world to come*, is not because it does not exist now, so that we should imagine that this world is first to be destroyed, and then only the other world will come into existence; such is not the case, it actually does exist, as it is said: *Which Thou* HAST *treasured up for them that fear Thee: which Thou* HAST *wrought* (Ps. xxxi. 19). But the sages called it *the world to come*, because that life is allotted to man subsequently to the life of this world, in which we are preserved both with body and Soul, and which is the first stage of human existence."

CHAPTER IX.

SEMITIC THEOSOPHY.

PART II.

THE SUFIS, AND MOHAMMEDAN THEOSOPHY.

IT is not our province to deal with the well-known personal history of the great Arabian Prophet, the founder of Islam, whose name, Mohammed, in Arabic, signifies The Praised. Nevertheless, it is well hastily to resume it, by recalling to mind that he was born at Mecca about the year 570, A.D.; that during his early years he gained a scanty subsistence as a shepherd and as a camel-driver, when suddenly his fortunes changed, by his employer, Chadidja, a wealthy widow, much older than himself, offering him her hand in marriage. It was not, however, till about his 40th year that there is anything really important to be told of his life.

Paganism had long ceased to be a living faith in the minds of the thoughtful, although the more ignorant still clung to it. Judaism prevailed, particularly in the northern parts of Arabia, thus the ancient religion of Abraham had spread a purer knowledge of the Divinity; and about this time, A.D. 600, Christianity had also penetrated into the Peninsula through Syria and Abyssinia.

Mohammed, on whose poetical mind the stories of the Patriarchs of Israel, adorned with all the legendary poetry and gorgeous colouring of the Midrash, had made a deep impression, together with the doctrine of the Unity of God taught by Moses, whom, with Jesus, he called the greatest prophet next to himself; began to see visions, and to receive divine communications. The Angel-Messenger Gabriel appeared to him, and taught him the true religion, giving him the divine mission to spread it abroad.

Then, with all his eloquence, he exhorted the people to lead a pious and virtuous life, and to pray to the one all-wise, everlasting, and indivisible God, who had chosen him as His Messenger and Prophet, as He had chosen the Hebrew prophets before him. At first he made but few converts, and these principally amongst the lower ranks; the higher classes paid little attention to him, considering him a common "soothsayer" or a poet who was not in his right mind. When, however, the number of his adherents began to increase, they paid more attention to his proceedings, and rose in fierce opposition against him: the persecution he and his followers met with was so great that he had to hide himself in a fortified castle belonging to his uncle, Abu Talib, for three years. During this time, however, the new doctrine continued to spread, and at last he was able to return; but misfortune was upon him, he had the great grief of losing his faithful wife, who had borne him two sons and four daughters. This loss was shortly followed by the death of his uncle; then he lost his fortune and was reduced to the greatest poverty; finally, he had to fly for his life.

At last, and after many unheard of escapes and adventures, he determined to seek refuge in the City of Medina; and from this flight, some ten or fifteen years after he first assumed the sacred office, began his career of prosperity; the very city itself became Medina Annabi (the City of the Prophet); from the first month of the next Arabic year dates the Hegira, or Mohammedan Era.* No longer a despised and persecuted madman, he was now the law-giver and ruler of the city, and of powerful numbers. He formed alliances with many of the Jewish tribes, but he did not succeed in converting them; they only ridiculed his pretensions to be the Messiah, which so enraged him that he became their bitterest enemy to the hour of his death. He, however, made alliances with the adjoining Bedouin tribes, and one of his most important acts soon after the Hegira, was the permission to go to war with the enemies of Islam in the name of God. Crowds of adventurers flocked to his standard; at first he met with many reverses, and was once dangerously wounded, but the third year he was able to celebrate the pilgrimage to Mecca, whose inhabitants had at last concluded a formal peace with him.

In the first war between the Christians and the

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* The whole East dates its chronolgy from this flight, or Hegira, the year 1 of Mohammedan Era being the 622nd Anno Domini and the 53rd of the Prophet's life.

Moslems, the latter were beaten with great loss, but the allies of Mohammed attacked and took Mecca, partly by surprise, with an army of 10,000 men. With this conquest the victory of the new religion was secured in Arabia, although wars were continued with several Arabian tribes, who marched against him, but the creed extended far and wide. He prepared for war against the Byzantines, but was unable to carry out his designs. Towards the end of the tenth year of the Hegira he undertook the last solemn pilgrimage to Mecca, at the head of 40,000 Muslims, and then, on Mount Arafat, he instructed his followers in all important laws and ceremonies, exhorting them to righteousness and piety.

Soon after his return from Mecca, and while occupied with preparations for an expedition against Syria, he fell dangerously ill, through a poisoned potion, and finally died in the house of Ayeshah, one of his wives, of whom he left nine at his death, which occurred in the third month of the eleventh year of the Hegira (8th June, 632). He was buried in the night of the 9th to 10th of June, in the very house where he died, and which afterwards became part of the adjoining Mosque.

This is the very briefest summary of his outward career, which was full of the most romantic adventure and stirring interest. Space will not permit us to attempt a survey of his visionary inner life, and the peculiar personal character and circumstances under which his extraordinary mission grew upon him until he became the founder of a faith to which now above 130 millions are said to adhere. Had he gone on as he began Islam might have been a noble and elevating religion; but his character underwent a great change after the Hegira, and from being a kind-hearted and affectionate man he became cruel and ruthless, particularly against the Jews, when he found they would not accept him for their Prophet: so much so that he on one occasion deliberately ordered the execution of seven or eight hundred Jewish prisoners, who had surrendered at discretion.

But Mohammed cannot be judged by the standard of other men, and his historians agree that, taking him all in all, humanity has seen few more earnest, noble, and sincere prophets, and that, "however much the religion of Islam may rightly or wrongly be considered the bane, and prime cause of the rottenness of eastern nations in the present day, it must not be forgotten that it is not necessarily Islam which has caused the corruption; as, indeed, its ethics are for the most part of the highest order; and in the second place, that Mohammed is not to be made responsible for all the errors of his successors."

The religion he established was no doubt needed when it came, for it was a protest againt the tendency to plurality in the Godhead. It was a reaction, a going back to pick up something that had been lost. The doctrine of the Trinity no doubt embodies a great truth, but it had been carried too far; so Mohammedanism came as a protest against this tendency; it was a new assertion of the simple unity of God: even the spirituality of the Jews was not quite as abstract as that of the Mohammedans, for it conceived of God as miraculously coming down with His people in prophets and kings, and mysteriously present in their tabernacles. Mohammedanism, therefore, may rightly be called the Unitarianism of the East.

But in thus teaching a God who is far above and removed from man an abstract spiritual entity, absent from Matter, and therefore never to be manifested in humanity, represented on canvas, or by sacred allegory, a God withdrawn out of the world in fact, he made life itself barren and empty by depriving man of the very first of the Divine Commandments—the love of God. Islam teaches the worship of One God as Supreme Will, whose law is fate and whose service is submission. It sees God, but not man; it teaches the claims of God to the incessant prayers and supplications of the faithful, but it does not admit the rights of humanity to the Love and Justice of God. Christianity with its living, loving, and ever-present "Divine Father," who calls His creatures not servants, but friends and sons, is the happier religion by far; it has been said that the contrast between it and Islam "is that of movement with fixedness, of development with sterility, of life with petrification; for Islam is lifeless and cannot grow, while Christianity is living, and because living, must advance, therefore must change, and was meant to do so, as time developes the human mind and enables it to see and penetrate divine mysteries; thus 'onwards and forwards' is the motto of the one, while 'stand still' is the motto as well as the most essenital condition of the other. The Seal and Secret of the one is summed up in the sentence 'La Illah illa Allah'; it is the pantheism of Force exclusively assigned to God, 'Keinā Yesha'o,' 'as he wills it,' to quote the constantly recurring expression of the Koran. The Seal and Secret of the other is declared in the words of Jesus, 'I in them, thou in Me,' and that 'all may be one in us'; thus 'God in man, is one with man in God.'"

Semitic Theosophy, as we have observed in Ch. VII., expresses more fear than love, and those Sufis who with a fearlessness peculiar to them identify themselves with the Deity, although possibly self-initiated into the highest mystery, are more like waifs from the Pagan Temple than orthodox worshippers in the Mohammedan Mosque.

Mohammedanism is called *Islām*, Resignation, or entire submission to the will of God. In its theoretical part it is *Imân*, Faith; in its practice, *Din*, Religion, (this is *Din* or Wisdom), which contains the ritual and moral laws, inculcating four chief duties—prayer, almsgiving, fasting, and pilgrimage. As the Koran superseded the Gospels, so Mohammed superseded Christ, whom they consider a great Prophet and Apostle, whose birth was miraculous, and who will come again to establish everywhere the Moslem religion. The belief in angels forms a prominent dogma; they are created of fire and stand between God and man, adoring and serving the One, interceding for and guarding the other. The chief angels are the "Holy Spirit," or "Angel of Revelations"—Gabriel; the special protector and guardian of the Jews—Michael; the "Angel of Death"—Azraël (Raphael in the Apocryphal Gospel of Barnabas); the "Angels of the Resurrection"—Israfeel, and Uriel; besides angels there are good and evil genii, the chief of the latter being Iblis (Despair). These Jin are subject to death; they have different names and offices (Peri Fairies, Div Giants, Takvins Fates, &c.), and are in all respects like the Shédim of the Jews.

The Koran teaches the doctrine of Eternal Decrees, or absolute Predestination; it tells of prophets before Mohammed, of whom he is the successor—as Adam, Noah, Moses, and Jesus—of sacred books, of which all that remain are the Pentateuch, Psalms, Gospels, and Koran; besides these they notice the Apocryphal Gospel of St. Barnabas, and the writings of Daniel.

They believe in the resurrection of both soul and body in the final judgment, also in Purgatory, or an intermediate state after death, in which the soul awaits the general resurrection, entering, according to its rank, either immediately into Paradise as a prophet, or partaker of the delight of an abode of bliss as a martyr (one who has been slain while fighting for Islam), or, as in the case of common believers, is supposed to linger near the grave, or be with Adam in the lowest heaven! Mohammed could not learn the time of the general resurrection from the Angel Gabriel, it being a mystery, but he learnt that the Day of Judgment will last from one to fifty thousand years, when, the trial over, the righteous will enter Paradise to the right hand, and the wicked will pass to the left into hell; both, however, have to go over the bridge Al Sirât, laid over the midst of hell, finer than a hair, and sharper than the edge of a sword; the righteous will proceed on their path with ease and swiftness, but the wicked will fall down headlong into hell below, a place divided into seven gradations, respectively assigned to Mohammedans, Jews, Christians, Sabeans, Magians, Idolators, and lowest of all to the hypocrites, who outwardly professing a religion, in reality had none; but the great majority of the inhabitants of hell are women.

The poor will enter Paradise five hundred years before the rich; there are about a hundred degrees of the various felicities which await the pious, these being a wild conglomeration of Jewish, Christian, Magian, and other fancies on the subject; but those who go to heaven find exceedingly sensual delights prepared for them, of the most ravishing nature. There are, however, higher degrees of recompense, of a purely spiritual kind, for those who are of a higher and more spiritual nature, and who on earth have lived the inner life of the spirit rather than the outward life of the senses.

The signs of the approach of the last day are all taken from the Talmud and the Midrash of the Jews, where the signs of the coming of the Messiah are enumerated; these are the decay of faith, wars, seditions, dire disasters, the sun will rise in the west, the Beast will appear, Constantinople will be taken by the descendants of Israel, Antichrist will come, and there will be a war with the Jews, earthquakes in divers places, and total darkness caused by an eclipse, &c., &c.

There is no recognition in the Koran of human brotherhood; so far the reverse, that Mohammed made it a duty for Moslems to betray and kill their own brothers when they were infidels. One of the strictest injunctions of the Koran is that of making war against all infidels, and he who is slain while fighting for Islam is reckoned a martyr, and will meet with a rich reward. Mohammedanism is indeed the religion of the Sword, and the very opposite to that of the merciful Buddha, who taught tenderness and charity, not only to man but to the very humblest and lowest beast, and strictly forbade the shedding of blood.

It is the permanency more than the progress of Islam that is so remarkable, and this is chiefly due to the Koran, which forms the fundamental code not only of Mohammedan Theology, but which also regulates their civil laws. It is the most important document Mussulmen possess; there is no doubt that it is the personal work of Mohammed, and although not written by his hand * was certainly written from his recitations, and under his guidance; and so carefully has it been

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* It is a very singular circumstance that not one of the six great teachers of the Wisdom-Religion—Siddartha or Gotama Buddha, Pythagoras, Socrates, Jesus, Ammonius, or Mohammed—left any memorial of his existence, or of his doctrine, in writing.

preserved that, after all the years that have elapsed, there is still but One Koran current among all the widely different nations who are followers of Islam, and, to quote the eloquent words of Gibbon, "The language and laws of the Koran were studied with equal devotion at Samarcand and Seville, the Moor and the Indian embraced as countrymen and brothers in the pilgrimage to Mecca, and the Arabian language was adopted as the popular idiom in all the provinces west of the Tigris."

Nearly thirteen centuries have proved the permanency of the religion of the Arabian Prophet, which is still professed by so large a portion of the human race in Asia, Africa, and Europe; but though its power has decreased its bigotry and fanaticism have not diminished, as many sad episodes within the last century can amply prove; and the votaries of Islam still cling as closely to their faith in Turkey, Persia, Egypt, and India, at the end of the nineteenth century, as they did when, politically speaking, it was at the zenith of its power.

"Scarcely a century had elapsed after the death of Mohammed, and Islam by the power of the sword reigned supreme over Arabia, Syria, Persia, Egypt, the whole of the northern coast of Africa, and even as far as Spain; and notwithstanding the subsequent strifes and divisions of the interior of this gigantic realm, it grew and grew outwardly until the Crescent was made to gleam from the spires of St. Sophia at Constantinople, and the cry of 'Allah il Allah!' resounded before the gates of Vienna. From that time, however, the splendour and the power of Mohammedanism began to wane, although there are counted more than 130,000,000 this day, all over the Globe, who profess Islam. . . . Broadly speaking, the Mohammedans may be said to have been the enlightened teachers of barbarous Europe from the ninth to the thirteenth century. It is from the glorious days of the Abbaside rulers that the real renaissance of Greek spirit and Greek culture is to be dated. Classical literature would have been irredeemably lost had it not been for the home it found in the Schools of the Unbelievers in the dark ages." *

The transmission of astronomy is attributed to the two families who have descended from Abraham, the children of Isaac, and of Ishmael, his immediate descendants. From the Arabs we have received the names of the stars, and from the Hebrews the prophecies with which they are shown to correspond. As the Jews have faithfully kept the word of prophecy, the Arabs have preserved the names of the stars which so remarkably correspond with it.

M. Renan finds a tendency to Monotheism in the whole Semetic race, but Max Müller regards the true

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* For a fuller account of Mohammedanism see "Life of Mohammed," by Mr. W. Muir; Gibbon's "Decline and Fall"; Milman's "History of Christianity"; Clarke's "Ten Great Religions"; D'Herbelot's "Bibliothèque Orientale"; and "Chambers' Encyclopædia," from which some parts of this very concise summary have been taken.

origin of this tendency to have been in Abraham himself, "the friend of God" and "Father of the Faithful." He calls attention to the fact that both Moses and Christ, and subsequently Mohammed, preached no new God, but the God of Abraham. "Thus," says he, "the faith in the One living God, which seemed to require the admission of a Monotheistic instinct grafted in every member of the Semitic family, is traced back to one man." He adds his belief that this faith in one Supreme God came to him by a special revelation. "And if," continues Freeman Clarke, "by a special revelation is meant a grand, profound insight, an inspired vision of truth, so deep and so living as to make it a reality like that of the outer world (to the material senses), then we see no better explanation of the Monotheism of the Hebrews than this conviction transmitted from Abraham, through Father and Son, from generation to generation." For the most curious fact about the Jewish people is that every one of them is a child of Abraham, all look back to their great progenitor, "the friend of God."

But if the Israelites are the children of Abraham, so also are the Mohammedans, only, whereas the former are the descendants of Isaac, the son of the freewoman, the latter are descended from Ishmael, the son of the bondwoman; which circumstance, let us not forget, Paul tells us "is an allegory representing the two Covenants, the one from Mount Sinai, which gendereth to bondage, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children. But Jerusalem which is above is free"; adding, "Now we, brethren, as Isaac was, are the children of the promise" (Gal. iv. 22—32). And continuing the allegory in his Epistle to the Hebrews (xii. 22), he says: "But you are come unto Mount Sion, and unto the city of the living God, the heavenly Jerusalem, and to an innumerable company of angels, to the church of the first-born, which are written in heaven, and to Jesus, the Mediator of the New Covenant," &c., &c. And accordingly we read, concerning the merits or demerits of Mohammedanism, the religion of the descendants of the Son of Abraham by the Bondwoman,* that while inculcating as its central idea the unity of God, it has taught submission, obedience, patience, but it has fostered a wilful individualism; it has made social life lower. Its governments are not governments; its virtues are stoical; it makes life barren and empty; it encourages a savage pride and cruelty; it makes men tyrants or slaves, women puppets, religion the submission to an infinite despotism, and that it is a hard, cruel, empty faith, which should give way to the purer forms of a higher civilization. (Freeman Clarke, "Ten Great Religions.")

Mr. Palgrave, who is said to have given the latest and best account of the condition of Central and Southern Arabia, sums up all Mohammedan theology as teaching a divine unity of pure Will: man is wholly passive and impotent. He calls the system "a pantheism of force," God has no Will but arbitrary Will. He is a tremendous, unsympathising autocrat, but is yet jealous of His creatures, and delights in making them feel that they are His slaves. This, Mr. Palgrave asserts, is the main idea of Mohammedanism, and of the Koran, and this was what lay in the mind of Mohammed; "of this," he says:—

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* The Mohammedans, however, maintain that Hagar was not a slave but a Princess.

> "We have many authenticated samples—the Saheeh, the Commentaries of Begdâwee, the Mishkat-el-Mesabeeh, and fifty similar works afford ample testimony on this point. . . . Thus immeasurably and eternally exalted, above and dissimilar from all creatures, which lie levelled before Him on one common plane of instrumentality and inertness, God is One in the totality of Omnipotent and Omnipresent action, which acknowledges no rule, standard, or limit, save His own sole and absolute will. He communicates nothing to His creatures, for their seeming power and act ever remain His alone, and in return He receives nothing from them; for whatever they may be, that they are in Him, by Him, and from Him only. And, secondly, no superiority, no distinction, no pre-eminence, can be lawfully claimed by one creature over its fellow, in the utter equalisation of their unexceptional servitude and abasement; all are alike tools of the one solitary Force, which employs them to crush or to benefit, to truth or to error, to honour or to shame, to happiness or misery, quite independently of their individual fitness, deserts, or advantage, and simply because He wills it, and as He wills it.
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> . . . That the notion here given of the Deity, monstrous and blasphemous as it may appear, is exactly and literally that which the Koran conveys, or intends to convey, I at present take for granted. But that it is indeed so, no one who has attentively perused and thought over the Arabic text (for mere cursory reading, especially in a translation, will not suffice), can hesitate to allow. In fact, every touch in this odious picture has been taken, to the best of my ability, word for word, or at least meaning, from the 'Book,' the truest mirror of the mind and scope of

its writer. And that such was Mahomet's mind and idea is fully confirmed by the witness tongue of contemporary tradition."*

So much for the Covenant which, as St. Paul tells us, "*gendereth to bondage*, and answereth to Jerusalem which now is, and is in bondage with her children." Let us now turn to the Covenant which is the "Jerusalem from above," or from the children of the bondwoman to the children of the promise, and look at this picture as on that.

> "Christianity teaches a Supreme Being who is pure Spirit, 'above all, through all, and in all; from whom, and through whom, and to whom, are all things.' It is a more spiritual religion than Brahmanism, for the latter has passed on into Polytheism and idolatry, which Christianity has always escaped. Yet, while teaching faith in a Supreme Being, the foundation and substance below all existence, it recognises Him as a LIVING GOD. He is not absorbed in Himself, nor apart from His world, but a perpetual Providence, a personal Friend and Father. He dwells in eternity, but is manifested in time." (J. F. Clarke's "Ten Great Religions.")

And now let us see these two Covenants at work in every-day life, and look at their effects.

For this purpose we select a familiar and interesting account given by Miss Rogers in her little book, called "Domestic Life in Palestine," published in 1862, which will at least illustrate the character of the Mohammedan women. Miss Rogers travelled in Palestine with her brother, who was British Consul at Damascus, and found herself obliged to sleep in the same room with the wives of the Governor of Arrabeh, near Naplous:—

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* William Gifford Palgrave, "A Year's Journey Through Central and Eastern Arabia," third Edition.

"When I began to undress the women watched me with curiosity; and when I put on my night-gown they were exceedingly astonished, and exclaimed, 'Where are you going? Why is your dress white?' They made no change for sleeping, and there they were, in their bright-coloured clothes, ready for bed in a minute. But they stood round me till I said 'Good-night,' and then all kissed me, wishing me good dreams. Then I knelt down, and presently, without speaking to them again, got into bed, and turned my face to the wall, thinking over the strange day I had spent. I tried to compose myself to sleep, though I heard the women whispering together. When my head had rested about five minutes on the soft red-silk pillow I felt a hand stroking my forehead, and heard a voice saying very gently, 'Ya Habibi,' *i.e.*, 'O beloved.' But I would not answer directly, as I did not wish to be roused unnecessarily. I waited a little while, and my face was touched again. I felt a kiss on my forehead, and a voice said, 'Miriam, speak to us; speak, Miriam, darling.' I could not resist any longer; so I turned round, and saw Helweh, Saleh Bek's prettiest wife, leaning over me. I said, 'What is it, sweetness, what can I do for you?' She answered, 'What did you do just now when you knelt down and covered your face with your hands?' I sat up, and said very solemnly, 'I spoke to God, Helweh.' 'What did you say to Him?' said Helweh. I replied, 'I wish to sleep. God never sleeps; I have asked Him to watch over me, and that I may fall asleep, remembering that He never sleeps, and wake up remembering His presence. I am very weak. God is all-powerful. I have asked Him to strengthen me with His strength.' By this time all the ladies were sitting round me on the bed, and the slaves came and stood near. I told them I did not know their language well enough to explain to them all I thought and said. But as I had learned the Lord's Prayer by heart, in Arabic, I repeated it to them sentence by sentence, slowly. When I began, 'Our Father, who art in heaven,' Helweh directly said, 'You told me your father was in London.' I replied, 'I have two fathers, Helweh: one in London, who does not know that I am here, and cannot know till I write and tell him; and a Heavenly Father, who is here now, who is with me always, and sees and hears us. He is your Father also. He teaches us to know good from evil, if we listen to Him and obey Him.'

"For a moment there was perfect silence. They all looked startled, and as if they felt that they were in the presence of some unseen power. Then Helweh said, 'What more did you say?' I continued the Lord's Prayer, and when I came to the words, 'Give us this day our daily bread,' they said, 'Cannot you make bread yourself?' The passage, 'Forgive us our trespasses as we forgive those that trespass against us,' is particularly forcible in the Arabic language; and one of the elder women, who was particularly severe and relentless looking, said, 'Are you obliged to say that every day?' as if she thought that sometimes it would be difficult to do so. They said, 'Are you a Moslem?' I said, 'I am not called a Moslem; but I am your sister, made by the same God, who is the one only God, the God of all, my Father and your Father.' They asked me if I knew the Koran, and were surprised to hear that I had read it. They handed a rosary to me, saying, 'Do you know that.' I repeated a few of the most striking and comprehensive attributes very carefully and slowly. Then they cried out, 'Mashallah, the English girl is a true believer'; and the impressionable, sensitive-looking Abyssinian slave-girls said, with one accord, 'She is indeed an angel.'

"Moslems, men and women, have the name of Allah constantly on their lips, but it seems to have become a mere form. This may explain why they were so startled when I said, 'I was speaking to God.' If I had only said, 'I was saying my prayers,' or 'I was at my devotions,' it would not have impressed them. Next morning on awaking I found the women from the neighbourhood had come in 'to hear the English girl speak to God,' and Helweh said, 'Now, Miriam, darling, will you speak to God?' At the conclusion I asked them if they could say Amen, and after a moment of hesitation they cried out, 'Amên, Amên!' Then one said, 'Speak again, my daughter, speak about *the bread*.' So I repeated the Lord's Prayer with explanations. When I left they crowded around affectionately, saying, 'Return again, oh, Miriam, beloved!'"

The Mohammedan idea of God is that of an abstract spirituality, distant and incomprehensible, far above the world, and above all; the Monotheism of the Jews differs from this, that it combines with the idea of Will the idea of Justice. Righteousness and justice are ideas of God with which the Jewish books abound. "Mohammed teaches a God above us, Moses a God above us and yet with us. Jesus teaches God above us, God with us, and God in us."

Five times a day the Muezzin proclaims the hour of prayer from the minarets in these words: "There is no God but God, Mohammed is his prophet; come to prayer," and immediately every Mussulman prostrates himself on the ground, wherever he may be, with the greatest humility. There is no doubt that they are very punctilious in their religious duties, and many of them are sincerely pious. They consider prayer to be the Key of Paradise; but that the prayer should be efficacious certain religious purifications are required as necessary preparations. They are of two kinds: the *Ghusl*, or total immersion of the body, is required as a religious ceremony on some special occasions; and the *Wadû*, a partial ablution to be performed immediately before the prayer. This is of primary importance and consists of the washing of hands, face, ears, and feet, up to the ankles; a proceeding accompanied generally at each stage by corresponding pious sentences.

It is admitted that the Koran was made up, after the death of Mohammed, in a moment of confusion and civil strife, partly from papers and partly from the memories of his followers, and that twenty-two years afterwards it was again made up or redacted by Othman. It contains evident marks of two religions—the one previous to the flight to Medina, and the other posterior to that flight. The first is the Koran of Mohammed and the first four Caliphs—the first four sincere and zealous Patriarchs, commanding immense armies, but walking on foot to the Mosque to chaunt the praises of God in such simple ceremonies as might be expected from a reformer; the second, the Koran of the conquering and magnificent Saracen, puffed up with pride and vanity. Thus the Koran contains two very distinct religions: the first a system of pure theism, as perfect as the age could produce, having the germs of purity and illumination, inculcating severe morals and stoical submission; the second teaches a sanguinary propagandism, fraught with bigotry and intolerance. One was the religion of Mohammed the Sophee, the follower of Divine Wisdom, the other the doctrine of the conquering Caliphs.

That there are beauties in the Koran we do not dispute, and the Mohammedans consider its beauty to be a sufficient proof of its Divine inspiration; but in elevation of thought and in clearness of expression it will not bear a comparison with other sacred writings. "To us," says M. Renan, "the Koran appears declamatory, monotonous, tedious." Unlike the Bible, which is the inspiration of many elevated minds, the Koran is that of the mind of one man alone; for this very reason it may certainly lay claim to uniformity of expression throughout, but it is a mechanical uniformity that, as M. Renan truly says, becomes monotonous and tedious. He might also have said that it lacks not only the variety of expression, but also the grand liberality of the Hebrew Scriptures. It is narrow and intolerant as a whole; nevertheless it contains, of course, many fine passages. Take, for instance, this description of the infidel:

> "As darkness over a deep sea, billows riding on billows below, and clouds above, one darkness on another darkness, so that if a man stretches out his hand he cannot behold it: thus is he to whom the light of God doth not come."

And a passage called "The folding up":

> "When the sun shall be folded up, and the stars shall fall, and the mountains be put in motion, and the seas boil, and the leaves of the book be unrolled, and the heavens be stripped off like a skin, and hell shall begin to blaze, and Paradise draw near, then shall every soul know what it has done."

The following is a metrical account of the verses, &c., of the Koran, taken from a very beautiful copy, once the property of the unfortunate Tippoo Sultan, preserved in the public library at Cambridge:

> "The verses of the Koran, which is good and heart-delighting,
> Are six thousand, six hundred, and sixty-six.
> One thousand of it command, one thousand strongly prohibit,
> One thousand of it promise, one thousand of it threaten.
> One thousand of it read in choice stories;
> And know, one thousand of it to consist in instructive parables,
> Five hundred of it in discussions on lawful and unlawful;
> One hundred of it are prayers for morning and evening.
> Know, sixty-six abrogating and abrogated.
> Of such an one I have now told you the whole."

In the 6,666 we may surely see the idea of the cyclic system. The first cycle was 6, the second 60, the third 600, the next 6,000; and thus we see Mohammed so generally considered to be the tenth Avatar, the Om-Ahmed, or renewed incarnation; the tenth incarnation of Buddha, or *Divine Wisdom*, the cyclar *desire of all nations;* coming as he did 600 years after Jesus, as Jesus came 600 years after Buddha, and was himself succeeded by Genghis Khan.* The ten incarnations were the ten revolutions of the Neros or the sacred Om. At the birth of Christ *eight* had passed as allowed by the Brahmins, and testified of by Virgil, Zoroaster, and the Sybils. That the world was to come to an end in 6,000 years, that is to say, in ten Avatars, Calpas, or ages of 600 years each, was the generally received opinion of the early Christians, although they were uncertain whether these ages were to begin from the Creation or the Flood.

In the time of Richard the First, A.D. 1190, a general belief prevailed that the end of the world drew near, a belief which in great measure caused the Crusades to Palestine, where the devotees expected the Saviour to appear. The persons who were initiated into the Esoteric religion of the Vatican, after being disappointed in the year of Christ 600, imagined that the famous 6000 years would end about the year 1200 of Christ, when the Millennium would commence, and it was this which caused the crusade against the Mohammedan anti-Christ who had arisen against the new, the tenth, and the last Avatar or Messenger. If the ninth age began with Christ, then, they argued, the tenth would begin with the year 600 and finish with the year 1200; and then would be the manifestation of the Lord at Jerusalem, which the devotees wished to prepare for His reception. This is attested by St. Bernard of Clairvaux, and was foretold by Joachim, Abbot of

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* "It is a fact very little known, and not hitherto explained, that the native Hindoo princes formerly solicited (and even yet, if the British did not prevent it, would solicit) investiture in their dominions by the hand of the Mogul at Delhi (the city of *seven* gates, like the city of Thebes, governed by Al-Mage, the *Mage* or Mogul; Delhi, city of The God—II., D-'el-ii.), though he is a Mohammedan, and they are followers of Cristna or of the Brahmins. The reason is found in his being a descendant of Genghis Khan, who was believed to be an Avatar, a Vicramaditya, and as such entitled to universal dominion. Mohammed is also considered by them to have been an Avatar, as he was certainly considered by the Afghans, and the ancient pilgrimages of Hindoos to Mecca confirm this theory. The Sopheism of India and Mohammed were, no doubt, originally the same. It is evident that the Mogul, the King of Siam, the Emperor of China, all claim to be the

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descendants of the eldest son of the first Patriarch, and from him have a right to the empire of the world. From this we may see that their titles of *King of Kings*, &c., &c., are not examples of mere empty, fulsome adulation, but that they have a basis. On this rests their claim or title of *Son of the Sun and Moon*, which at first appears to us so monstrously ridiculous. The empire of Genghis Khan was called the *wise government*, or the *government of wisdom*. Respecting this prince see, in the *Ency. Brit.*, Art., Mogul, pp. 299, &c., the pedigree of Japhet, the romantic account of his ancestors for 400 years, his inauguration by a prophet, the change of his name from Teninjin, and the belief of his subjects that he was entitled to possess the whole world. This inauguration of Genghis took place in the thirteenth century, when in Europe the Millennium was expected, when all men were looking out for some *one to come*. Genghis Khan marched into China in A.D. 1211."—(" Anacalypsis " II., p. 353.)

Curacio in Calabria, a most renowned interpreter of astronomy in those days. Anti-Christ was to appear at Antioch, and the fanatical crusade was *the gathering together of the kings of the earth* to the battle of *the great day of God Almighty.* It seems from the accounts that the possession of Antioch was made a great point, almost as much so, indeed, as that of Jerusalem. It was among the first cities taken by the Crusaders.

We, who are living at the end of the second cycle or calpa of 600 years since their time, are again speculating upon the end of the world, (age, or calpa), for all the signs of the times point to a great moral change about to come on the earth, and some of us consider this change is actually upon us, and that we already begin to experience some of its effects—in fact, that it literally began with the year 1882 ; 1881 being, according to many coinciding prophecies, the last year of the old Dispensation, and personally we have adopted the custom of dating from that year as *Anno Dominæ 1*, employing the word in its feminine termination, the New Dispensation having been foretold to be of feminine import, no less, indeed, than the advent of Divine Wisdom or THEO-SOPHIA, therefore the age of making known all that which has been kept secret from the beginning.

Perhaps a more satisfactory explanation of the feminine character of the New Dispensation may be obtained from our brothers of the Orient (*Ex Oriente Lux*). In their doctrine of the Sevenfold Constitution of Man we find that the Soul is ever considered feminine. The first, or earthly Soul, the *Anima Bruta*, (the "4th Principle"), is derived from, and represented by, the Earth Mother, EVE, but the Spiritual Soul, the *Anima Divina*, (the "6th Principle"), is literally the Bride from Heaven—MARY, the Virgin Mother of the Christ in Man; and it is the Advent of this Spiritual Soul *in humanity* that is now expected, and which will in due time favour the SECOND COMING OF CHRIST, as the Christ Spirit is conceived in, and born of this 6th Principle, or Spiritual Soul—which is the Mother of God in Man. Thus the New Dispensation will literally be "the MANIFESTATION OF THE SONS AND DAUGHTERS OF GOD."

Certainly the signs of the times would strongly confirm the accuracy of the calculations on which such a conviction is based, for more than in any previous age may the present be described, in the words of Daniel,* as "*the time of the end*," when "*many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*" Not only have the means of locomotion seemingly reached their full-pressure power, and news is carried round the world in the twinkling of an eye by means of electricity but also it is proving itself on all sides to be most especially the time of making known, for all myths and allegories are now being explained and fully manifested in their true meaning to those who have ears to hear, and hearts to understand, and it is only those who are still so much on the lower plane of materialism, and who are therefroe indifferent to such revelations, who will fail to partake of the good fare now sent anew to those who love the Lord, and will therefore gladly receive the revelations of "the SPIRIT OF TRUTH, the Comforter," so distinctly prophesied by Christ, the latest of the messengers from the courts of our sweet Universal Mother the Divine Wisdom.

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* Chapter xii. of Daniel. See also xxiv. Matthew.

It is a curious fact that the numerals of the year 1881, summed up Kabbalistically thus—1 + 8 + 8 + 1 = 18, and divided by three, give forth the three mysterious sixes, or 666, the Apocalyptic number of the Beast, which may mean *denial*, the spirit of unbelief and materialism, for we are told that it is also the number of the man. But this is the earth man, who having completed his material state is henceforward called by a new name, (probably "a Son of God"), and expected to lead a new life; and apropos of this there is yet another remarkable coincidence regarding this date 1881 to be found in the seventeenth chapter of Genesis, in which we read that the Lord God Almighty renewed the covenant with Abram, thenceforward to be called by a "NEW NAME" (A-Braham or Son of God) when he was "ninety years old and nine," promising that he should be the father of many nations, and calling upon him to walk before him and be PERFECT. The union of God and man naturally involves the idea of man's most perfect state, when, in other words, the son of man is born again, or regenerated, and becomes a Son of God.

Now, we find that the age of Abraham at that remarkable time was 99, which multiplied by the 19 years of the Metonic cycle gives us again the eventful date 1881, and also again, thus Kabbalistically summed, 1 + 8 = 9, 8 + 1 = 9, or 99. In fact, these numerals can be read backwards and forwards, or placed perpendicularly and read upwards or downwards, for they will always give the same number, or date—1881.*

In the Baghavat Gita, Arjun is informed by Christna that God is in the fire on the altar, and that the devout with offerings, direct their worship unto God in the fire. "I am the fire! I am the victim!" The Divinity is frequently characterised in that book, as in other Sanscrit compositions, by the secret, therefore *not-to-be-spoken* word Om, that mystic emblem of the Deity in India. The letter M, the *middle* letter, was held a sacred mystery. It was the Omphalos, or Λελφυς. It was the monogram of Mater, Maia, Maria, Mary, the Regina Cœli. All the Indian nations admit their ignorance of the etymology or meaning of their sacred AUM, they constantly use it as OM, which they acknowledge to be a corruption, but they know not how. It seems very probable that the AUM may once have been the AMΩ—the Alpha and Omega with the addition of the middle letter of the alphabet; at all events it connects well with the mystic AMO—I love (the Divine Love) and with Mo-ahmed or Om-ahmed, Om *the desire of all nations;* whom Jesus was believed by the gnostics and templars to have foretold. In the Anacalypsis we read:

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* For further particulars concerning this eventful year the reader is referred to a small book entitled "HOW THE WORLD CAME TO AN END IN 1881," published by Hamilton, Adams and Co.; and also to a pamphlet entitled "1881 and 1882," by the Countess of Caithness; to be obtained at The Philanthropic Reform Publishing Offices, Oxford Mansion, London, W.

"From the Mohammedans we can learn little; and it is probable that the Turks may really possess nothing of the Arabian knowledge upon these subjects. But it is a most important fact, that the Brahmins maintain that Mohammed either was or pretended to be a Vicramaditya and Avatar. The fact cannot be denied that when the Mohammedans overran India they did not destroy the images of the Buddhists. The reason was because in the simple, unadorned, uncorrupted icon of Buddha they found their own Om, and Mohammed was believed by himself, or by his followers, to be the tenth and last Avatar—incarnation of the sacred *Om*, the Amed or *desire of all nations.* On this account it was that the Afghans and the mountaineers of Mewar and Malwa came to be among the first of Mohammed's followers.

"The fact is Mohammedanism was no *new* religion, it was only a continuation of Buddhism. Mecca, the sacred city of Mohammed, was well known to the ancients by a name which had the meaning of the name Mohammed. It was called *Maco* or *Moca* by Ptolemy, or Moca, the *great or illustrious.* Colonel Wilford informs us that the Arabian writers unanimously support the doctrine--that the present Mecca is the Moca of Ptolemy. The seaport of this Moca is the town or port of Baddeo-regia, or the city of the holy and royal Buddha.

"Mocsha means *eternal bliss*; then the name will be *place of eternal happiness.* The indubitable fact that Mecca was a place sacred to the Amed, or *desire of all nations*, before Mohammed, the camel-driver, was born, opens to our view a new enigma, which cannot be solved without supposing an esoteric religion in Mohammedanism, as well as in all other religions.

"The prejudices of modern Christians entirely blind them to the undeniable fact that every Mohammedan is as really a Christian as themselves. And this is in perfect keeping with their possession of the magnificent Church, or Mosque, of St. John, at Damascus, where his head is preserved and so much venerated that the Turks will not permit even one of their own religion to look at it, and never permit a Christian to go into the church or mosque.

"Jesus Christ was believed by the followers of Mohammed to be a divine incarnation, or a person divinely inspired, and to have foretold the next and the last Avatar, *Mohammed*, to complete the *ten* periods and the *six* millenaries, previous to the great millennium, or the reign of the Χρησος, or Christ, on earth for the last and seventh period of one thousand years. Irenæus and the first Christian Fathers said, that during this period the *lion* was to lie down with the *lamb*, and the grapes were to cry out to the faithful *to come and eat them!*

"I think in the expression alluded to in the Koran, if I mistake not, there is a proof that the doctrine of the renewal of the cycle was held by Mohammed, or was thought to be applicable to him; and it seems that the writer of that book held up Mohammed as a new incarnation. Divine Love, coming in the tenth Sæculum, as foretold by the Sybils, by Jesus, and also by the prophet Haggai (ii. 7)—'*and the desire of all nations shall come:*' 'חמד HMD. '*From this root*' (says Parkhurst) '*the pretended prophet Mohammed, or Mahomet, had his name.*' I beg to refer to what I have said in my last section; there my reader will see that the end of the tenth cycle was foretold by Christian Astrologers, which caused the fanatical crusaders almost by millions to flock to Jerusalem about the year 1200, the end of Mohammed's cycle. The observation of Mr. Faber, that Mohammed's mission began at the year 608, is important. This is the very period when the tenth Avatar ought to commence, according to the system of the Neros. If this be accident it is surely a very extraordinary accident that among all the numbers the identical number of the great Neros should be fallen on.

"The expression which the Mohammedans say has been expunged from the Romish Gospels is as follows: 'And when Jesus, the Son of Mary, said, O Children of Israel, verily I am the Apostle of God sent unto you, confirming the law which was delivered before me and bringing good tidings of an Apostle who shall come after me and whose name shall be AHMED.' (Chap. lxi.) This is correctly as foretold by Haggai."

Thus we see that it was not without foundation Mohammed was held to be the tenth Avatar, or Theosophic Messenger from the Logos or Divine

Wisdom. Although neither mentally or morally perfect, he was certainly Adept enough to absorb for his religion what mystic element he understood, and by his mediumistic inspiration brought a fresh impulse into the Occult World, and infused new life into languishing yet undying theosophic systems. The enthusiasm with which he inspired his disciples was not entirely expended in the mere conquest of other nations. It also taught a number of his followers *that* conquest which is greater than all;—the conquest of SELF. It was the Theosophy of the few that served as inspiration to the martial spirit of the many. Thus we again see that Theosophy was the originator and cause of a great movement.

The Sufis, generally considered to be Moslem mystics, have much of the primitive Kabbala embodied in their Theosophy. Passing through Sabean and Magian channels, a stream of pre-Mohammedan tradition has been preserved; and although their writings may cite the Koran, any other inspired book would serve them as well, so little are they indebted to the religion of Mohammed; and it is evident that the Sufism, which is most numerously represented in Persia, is derived from the ancient religion of the Magi, and is but Magianism under another name; for all these systems are essentially and esoterically one. The more strictly *Mohammedan* Theosophy must be sought among the Ba-Shara Orders of Dervishes. But as several ancient Orders of Pagan Theosophy by merely changing a few names of gods have survived in orthodox

Christianity and Islamism, it will be seen how little each system can really claim as its own if the leaven of the ancient Wisdom-Religion were to be taken from it.

In the very first year of the Hegira, forty-five men of Mecca combined with the same number of the inhabitants of Medina, to form a theosophic order; making a vow to be faithful to the doctrine of their teacher, Mohammed, and to follow theosophic practice in a spirit of mortification and penitence. To distinguish themselves from the other Moslems, they at first assumed the time-honoured name of Sufis. This title was, however, soon applied to all zealous partisans of Islam, and being also given to all who devote themselves to isolation, study, and a contemplative life; and as there were, moreover, Sabean, Magian, and Gnostic Sufis extant, it seems not to have answered the distinctive character intended.

Applying then unto themselves a certain saying of Mohammed, "poverty is my glory" (el fakru fakree), these Theosophists, who, as a practical illustration of their principles held, like the Essenes, all possessions in common, elected to be known by the appellation of Fakeers. Thus the Fakeers date from Mohammed, but the Sufis are far more ancient.

Following the example of the school of Mohammed, Abubekr and Ali then established similar orders under the direction and spiritual guidance of Mohammed. Being independently instituted, each of these orders had a different method of practice, but all members were bound by a common vow.

At the death of Abubekr the presidency of his order was transferred to Selman Farissi, and that of Ali passed, at the death of the latter, to Hassan Bassri. Both these presidents were consecrated under the mystic name of Khilafeth, signifying vicariat, and indicating (if the word has any mystic meaning) that each had brought the vicarious atonement for himself, that he had died the mystic death of the senses, and attained to Divine Union, before the Presidency of the Order was entrusted to him. The theosophic nucleus, which was the beginning of Mohammedan monasticism, appears to have been not the order formed by Mohammed himself, that is to say, by the men of Mecca and Medina. This seems to have remained as a stationary local affair, or became absorbed with its younger offshoots; but the two great orders of Abubekr and Ali have been renewed and increased in many ways up to the present time.

Every century brought, in Mohammedan states, some new theosophic order, and these were not evanescent institutions, for many continue to exist. Mouradjea D'Ohsson enumerates thirty-two. They are divided into two great classes, "Ba-Shara" (with the law), or those who govern their conduct according to the principles of Islam; and the "Be-Shara" (without the law), or those who do not rule their lives according to the principles of any religious creed, although they call themselves Mussulmans. * The latter probably are

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* Hughes "Notes on Mohammedanism," p. 139, quoted by J. W. H. Stobart, "Islam and its founder."

Sufis, having a pre-Mohammedan tradition. The thirty-two orders of Dervishes are: the Elwanis, Edhemis, Bestamis, Sacatis, Cadris, Rufayis, Subherwerdis, Kubrewis, Shazilis, Mewlewis, Bedawis, Nakshibendis, Sadis, Bektashis, Khalwetis, Zeinis, Babayis, Beyramis, Eshrefis, Bekris, Sunbulis, Gulshenis (also called Rushenyis), the Ighis-Bashis, Um-Sinawis, Djelwetis, Eushakis, Shemsis, Sinnanumis, Niyazis, Muradis, Nuredimis, and the Djemalis.

Three of these orders, the Bestamis, Nakshibendis, and Bektashis claim descent from the congregation of Abubekr, while the rest assert to be derived from that of Ali. They are mostly named after the Sheikhs who founded them, and a genealogy called Silsileth ul Ewliya-ullah, the genealogy of the Saints of God, is aspired to in connection with the establishment of these orders; almost as numerous as Christian sects.

Pir Mohammed Nakshibendi, a religious Reformer, established an order bearing his own name, and founded upon the principles of two primitive orders, but especially upon those of Abubekr. It was more a meeting-house for citizens than a monastic order, although an inner circle for the higher life was established within it. The members of the order met on Thursdays (the eve of the Mohammedan Sabbath) to pray in common. They were also bound to recite separately a certain number of prayers daily; just as in the Catholic Church.

The practice of the Dervishes of dancing, or rather whirling, and of swaying the body, current in nearly all Mohammedan monasteries, is only conducive to arrive at a mediumistic condition not pertaining to our inquiry. If the Mohammedan Theosophy has not the science of the Aryan systems, its intuitional method, although at times straying into mere spiritism, often arrives at remarkably true definitions.

Many ingenious esoteric explanations are given by the Mohammedan Mystics of the exoteric forms of their religious system, as the following may serve to show :—

> "The performing the circuit of the Caaba,* the being free from wickedness and crime is *Sheriat;* but the performing the circuit of the house of God, to wit, the heart, and warring with the natural inclination, and performing obedience to the angels is *Tarikat;* to remain constantly meditating on Almighty God, to believe firmly in the instruction received, to remove the veil of whatever exists besides God from the heart, and to fix the view on the charms of the object of celestial affection are matters of *Hakikat;* to view the Divine nature with the eye of the heart, to see him on every side face to face, in every mansion with the light of understanding, and to injure no creature of the all-just are matters of *Marifat* (cognition); to know the all-just and comprehend the mystic sound of the beads in reciting prayers of praise, and to understand the import of the Divine names are matters of *Kurbat* (nearness); to choose the renunciation of self, and to do everything in the Divine essence, to exhibit abstraction from superfluous objects and to be convinced of the Divine union are matters of *Weslat* (advent); to lose individuality in Deity absolute and in surviving to become absolute, and to be united with the unity, and to be

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* The Caaba with its 360 pillars around (as in the *now* Catholic Cathedral at Cordova, in Spain, which was formerly a Mosque), representing the circle or wheel of the heavens, was the Temple of Mohammed (like the Temple of Solomon), or circle wheel of Mohammed, or of Om, *the desire of all nations.* The idea of wheel applied to the revolving planetary bodies is peculiarly appropriate. The Cavah is the origin of our word *cave.* All the oldest temples of Zoroaster and the Indians were caves, acknowledged to be in imitation of the vault or circle, or wheel of heaven.

delivered from evil is *Tauhid* (union); the indwelling and being resided in the assuming the attributes of the Deity absolute, and renouncing a person's own attributes are matters of *Sekunat* (quiescence), and beyond this there is no superior degree."—(*Bayezid.*)

The writings of the Sufis are well worth the attention of the earnest student, for the true Theosophists amongst Mussulmen must be sought for amongst them. Sufism, or rather Sopheism, is the mystic name of Mohammedanism recognising communion with God, and not merely submission as being the essence of true religion. The great Persian sect of Sufis are mystical pantheists. It was a Sufi who was the author of the saying, "When we cry in our prayer 'O my Father.'" The answer is in the prayer itself; for in the "My Father" lies hidden "Here, my child." Again, the same Sufi exclamined, "How long, O my God, art Thou pleased that I should thus remain between the myself and the Thyself? Take away from me the myself, that I may be absorbed into Thyself."

Sufi—or *Sopheism*, as we prefer to call it after the Holy Sophia, or Divine Wisdom, (the name, by the way, of the Great Mosque of Islam at Constantinople, which is most significantly called "SANTA SOPHIA"), is divided into four stages. In the first the initiate is required to observe the rites and ceremonies of religion for the sake of the vulgar, who are incapable of looking to higher matters. In the second stage, he is said to obtain power or force, and may leave his teacher and study by himself; he is said to enter the pale of

Sopheism, and he may quit forms and ceremonies, which he exchanges for spiritual worship. This stage cannot be obtained without great piety, virtue, and fortitude: for the mind cannot be trusted in the neglect of usages and rites necessary to restrain it when weak, till it hath acquired strength from habits of mental devotion grounded on a proper knowledge of its own dignity, and of the Divine nature. The third stage is that of Knowledge, *i.e.*, *Wisdom*, and the disciple who arrives at it is deemed to have attained supernatural knowledge, in other words, to be inspired, and when he arrives at this state he is supposed to be equal to the angels. The fourth and last stage denotes his arrival at *truth*, which implies his complete union with the Divinity.

It appears that they "are *invited* by their teachers to *embark on the sea of doubt*." Sir John Malcolm further states that their doctrines may be traced, "*in some shape or other, in every region of the world*," which no doubt they may. Again he says:

> "The Sofees represent themselves as devoted to the search of truth, and incessantly occupied in adoring the Almighty, an union with whom they desire with all the fervour of Divine love. The Creator, according to their belief, is diffused over all His creation He exists everywhere, and is in everything. They compare the emanations of His essence to the rays of the Sun, which they conceive are continually darted forth and re-absorbed; and they believe that the soul of man and the principle of life which exists throughout all nature *are not from* God but of God." ("Sir John Malcolm's History," page 269.)

The true character of the Sufis, or Sofees, and of the Esoteric faith of pure Mohammedism may be clearly discerned from the concluding passage of Sir John Malcolm respecting them:

> "I have abstained from any description of the various extraordinary shapes which this mystical faith has taken in India, where it has always flourished, and where it has at times been beneficial to uniting the opposite elements of the Hindoo and Mohammedan faith (shown in the case of the Sikhs), nor have I ventured to offer any remarks on the similarity between many usages and opinions of the Sofees and those of the Gnostics and other Christian sects, as well as of some of the ancient Greek philosophers. The principle Sofee writers are familiar with the wisdom of Aristotle and Plato: their most celebrated works abound with quotations *from the latter*. An account of Pythagoras if translated into Persian would be read as that of a Sofee saint. His initiation into the mysteries of the Divine Nature, his deep contemplation and abstraction, his miracles, his passionate love of music, his mode of teaching his disciples, the persecution he suffered, and the manner of his death, present us with a close parallel to what is related of many eminent Sofee teachers, and may lead to a supposition *that there must be something similar in the state of knowledge* and of society where the same causes produce the same effects."

Indeed there is something similar, for they are all identical, with a few trifling alterations produced by time and change of country. Here in the Sofees, or Sufis, of Persia we have the Esoterici of Zoroaster, of Buddha, of Moses, of Jesus, and of Mohammed. In short, Sopheism, or Sufeism, is Gnosticism, and if we can discover the one we shall discover the other. Sir William Jones says of the Sufis:

> "I will only detain you with a few remarks on that metaphysical theology which has been professed immemorially by a numerous sect of Persians and Hindoos, was carried in part into

Greece, and prevails even now among the learned Mussulmans, who avow it without reserve. The modern philosophers of this persuasion are called *Sufis*, either from a Greek word for a sage or from the woollen mantle which they used to wear in some provinces of Persia. Their fundamental tenets are: that nothing exists absolutely but God; that the human soul is an emanation from the Divine essence, and though divided for a time from its heavenly source, will finally be reunited with it; that the highest possible happiness will arise from its reunion; and that the chief good of mankind in this transitory world consists in as perfect an union with the Eternal Spirit as the incumbrances of a mortal frame will allow: that for this purpose they should break all *connection* (or *taalluk*, as they call it; that is, hold no conversation or talk) with extrinsic objects, and pass through life without attachments, as a swimmer in the ocean strikes freely without the impediment of clothes; that they should be straight and free as the cypress, whose fruit is hardly perceptible, and not sunk under a load like fruit trees attached to a trellis; that if mere earthly charms have power to influence the soul the idea of celestial beauty must overwhelm it in ecstatic delight; that for want of apt words to express the Divine perfections and the ardour of devotion we must borrow such expressions as approach the nearest to our ideas, and speak of beauty and love in a transcendent and mystical sense; that, like a reed torn from its native bank, like wax separated from its delicious honey, the *Son of Man* bewails its disunion with melancholy music, and sheds burning tears, like the lighted taper waiting passionately for the moment of its extinction, as a disengagement from earthly trammels and the means of returning to its only beloved. Such in part (for I omit the minute and more subtile metaphysics of the Sufis which are mentioned in the Dabistan) is the wild and enthusiastic religion of the Persian poets, especially of the sweet Hafiz and the great Maulair: such is the system of the Vedanti philosophers and best lyric poets of India."

The Sufis of Persia are enthusiastically attached to poetry and music, both of which doubtless owe their origin to religion; and that recitative and chaunting are not modern Italian inventions any one would be led to believe who had heard an educated Hindoo recite a sacred Mantra, the mere cadence of which is soothing as music on the waters. But they have secrets and mysteries of every degree which they never reveal to the profane, and to reveal which would be a crime of the deepest turpitude. One of their most learned works, called the *Musnavi*, or *Mesnevi*, which teaches in the sweetest strains that all *nature abounds with Divine love*, was written by Jelalu D-Din Muhammed, Er-Rumi, commonly called the Moollah of *Room*.* There is no doubt that in this mystic name there is much more than meets the eye, for instance, the mystic or secret name of Rome (the anagram of Roma) is *Amor*, or *Divine love*. The real doctrines of the Sufis are a profound secret, untold by Hafiz or Maulair, but can be partially guessed at by the true Theosophist, for enough transpires to show the nature of the real uncorrupted system.

In addition to the Sofees, or Sufis, we have among the Indians the WISE men, called Rassees or Rishis, these are evidently taken from the Hebrew *Ras* or *Rasit* (see previous Chapter, pages 269 to 271), indeed their epithet or quality of *wisdom* shows that they were. Arrian notices these Rassees, or Sophees; by the latter name he calls them *Sophists* or *Wise Men* (Theosophists in fact) who, he says, are few in number, but rank first in the country (Hist. Ind., chaps. x., xi.). These

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* See the Biographical Anecdotes related of this Adept in the "ACTS OF THE ADEPTS," given in Part I., Chapter III., of the MESNEVI, Trübner's Oriental Series.

Sophists, he tells us, are found in the neighbourhood of the Temple of Solomon, in Cashmere, and are called *Rashees*; they are described as follows in Gladwin's "Ayeen Akberry," Vol. II. 155:—

> "The most respectable people in this country are the Rashees, who, although they do not suffer themselves to be fettered by traditions, are doubtless true worshippers of God. They revile not any other sect, and ask nothing of any one; they plant the road with fruit trees to furnish the traveller with refreshment; they abstain from flesh; and have no intercourse with the other sex. There are nearly 2,000 of their sect in Cashmere."

There can be no doubt that these Rishees, or Rashees, or Wise Men, are the same as Sophees, and are the Carmelites, Nazarites, or Essenians, belonging to the Temple of Solomon (that temple which the Mohammedans destroyed), and the tomb of Moses; in fact, Cashmere is all Holy Land.

It is curious that the *Sopha* is called the *Divan* in eastern countries, used solely by the Ras or Prince, or Divine incarnation of Wisdom. Divan is Div-ana, place of the Holy One. The head, the seat of wisdom, was Ras; the head ruler was the same; so the seat of the Ras was the Sofa or *Sopha*, place of wisdom or divan. It is probable that the origin of the tonsure, or shaving the head of priests with a razor (from Ras, to shave close), bore the same occult meaning, and signified their dedication to the Ras, or Wisdom, or Logos; in other words to the study of divine Wisdom; in fact, it is a custom so ancient that it is borrowed from the Egyptian priests. Juvenal in his

Sixth Satire says, that the high priest of Anubis, environed with a crowd of other priests clothed in fine linen, with his head shaved, deserves the first rank and surpreme honour. The tonsure of priests and monks is an exact imitation of that of the priests of Isis (one of the earthly representatives of the Great Mother —the Divine Wisdom); and St. Epiphanius also witnesses (Hær. 64) that the priests of Athens had the head shaved. This custom is however forbidden in Lev. xxi. 5, and the prohibition is afterwards repeated in Ezek. xliv. 20.

The Sufis of Persia, as we have just said, are enthusiastically attached to poetry and music, indeed it is the great distinction of the Sufi that he loves to veil the aspirations of his spirit after its Maker in poetry, which is often of the most exquisite kind, and so marked is this characteristic that no adequate idea can be conveyed of their religious aspirations without some reference to their poets and without a few specimens of their flights of mystical elevation, which sometimes rise to the truly sublime and transcendental.

.It was a Sufi who described all religions as the same liquor in different glasses :

> "All poured by God into one mighty bowl,
> The same draught quaffed by each regenerate soul."

The Sufi claims a knowledge of God which is immediate, and which he has attained by arriving at a knowledge of his own nature, and of his affinity to the Highest. Thus he needs no Temple wherein to worship, and is a Priest unto himself.

> "He needs a guide no longer who hath found
> The way already, leading to a Friend!
> Who stands already on heaven's topmost dome
> Needs not to search for ladders. He that lies
> Folded in favour on the Sultan's breast
> Needs not the letter or the messenger."

This state is that of union of spirit and soul with God, and is the occasion of another Arabic saying of their prophets: "Unity is reality, or the state of truth and perception of things where there is neither Lord nor servant." Again, they say: "The law is like a vessel; the true pathway is like the sea, the perception and truth of things is like the shell, and the knowledge of God is like the pearl therein; but he who wishes to obtain the pearl must first go on board the vessel."

As a specimen of the mystical Pantheism of the Sufis we quote the following extracts from Mahmud, a Sufi of the fifteenth century:—

> "All sects but multiply the I and thou;
> This I and thou belong to *partial* being;
> When I and thou and several being vanish,
> Then mosque and church shall bind thee nevermore.
> Our individual life is but a phantom;
> Make clear thine eye and see Reality!
>
> "The path from *me* to God is truly found
> When pure that *me* from self,
> As clearest flame from smoke."

The following little Persian poem is too exquisite to be omitted:—

"Abou-ben-Adhem—may his tribe increase!—
Awoke one night from a deep dream of peace,
And saw within the moonlight in his room,
Making it rich and like a rose in bloom,
An angel, writing in a book of gold.
Exceeding peace had made Ben-Adhem bold,
And to the presence in the light he said,
'What writest thou?' The vision raised its head,
And with a look, made all of sweet accord,
Answered, 'The names of those who love the Lord.'
'And is mine one?' said Abou. 'Nay, not so,'
Replied the angel. Abou spoke more low,
But cheerily still, and said, 'I pray thee then
Write me as one that loves his fellowmen.'
The angel wrote, and vanished. The next night
It came again with great awakening light,
And showed their names whom love of God had blest,
And lo! Ben-Adhem's name led all the rest!"

"On two days it steads not to run from the grave,
The appointed and the un-appointed day;
On the first neither balm nor physician can save,
Nor thee on the second the Universe slay."

We conclude with a Sufi Ode which occurs in an Oriental tale, entitled "Bismillah; or, Happy Days in Cashmere." The name of the poet is unknown, but the sentiment expressed in the verses is such as any true Theosophist would be ready to endorse:

"Pants thy spirit to be gifted
With a deathless life?
Let it seek to be uplifted
O'er earth's storm and strife.

"Spurn its joys, its ties dissever,
Hopes and fears divest;
Thus aspire to live for ever,
Be for ever blest!

"Faith and doubt leave far behind thee,
Cease to love or hate;
Let not time's illusions blind thee;
Thou shalt time outdate.

"Merge thine individual being
In the Eternal love;
All this sensuous nature fleeing
For pure bliss above.

"Earth receives the seed and guards it,
Trustfully it dies;
Then, what teeming life rewards it
For self-sacrifice!

"With green leaf and clustering blossom
Clad, or golden fruit,
See it from earth's cheerless bosom
Ever sunward shoot!

"Thus when self-abased, man's spirit
From each earthly tie
Rises disenthralled to inherit
Immortality!"

Sufism is really true Theosophy, or that spiritual intercourse of the individual with the universal which disregards and disclaims all ordinances and outward forms. Their worship is wholly spiritual and mental. The Sufi conceives himself and all nature to be an emanation from the Deity, and his Soul to be a portion of the Divine Essence. He endeavours by intense meditation on Divine perfection to lift himself above earth-life, and by totally abstracting his thoughts from the things of sense to attain unto a knowledge of the nature of Deity, and of his own Soul, and thus to become a possessor of Divine Wisdom or Omniscience.

After all, this is but what we have seen the Yogi or Hindoo Ascetic also striving for, by the most rigid austerities and mortifications. And it is the very doctrine which St. Paul preaches when he says, "Ye are the temple of the Living God" (2 Cor. vi. 16), and again (1 Cor. iii. 16), "Ye are the temple of God, and the Spirit of God dwelleth in you," reiterating the same assertion in many other of his epistles, as for instance, Eph. ii. 18 to 22, and iv. 9, 10; 1 Cor. vi. 17. But Plato, and Socrates, and Aristotle, taught this great truth long before Paul preached it to the Corinthians.

Hammer-Purgstall, who from his command of books, knowledge of languages, and decided taste for mystic lore, had every requisite qualification for the task, has written a voluminous History of Arabian Literature, wherein he never misses an opportunity to make us acquainted, by translations, with extracts from the works of the Sufis or Mohammedan mystics. This author gives us reason to believe that the Koran was held to contain a secret doctrine, and that Mohammedism is, in this respect, like Christianity ("*which was in its origin a secret society*"), a fact which indeed was maintained by the Mohammedan writer Avicenna. It is very certain that Jesus Christ always taught in parables ("and without a parable spoke He not unto them"); and also that He only initiated three of His own Apostles, viz., Peter, James, and John. These secret doctrines of the Koran were only taught by degrees, or initiations, or gradations, from lower to higher ranks. The doctrines of Pythagoras, Plato, and Aristotle, were taught as logical and fundamental truths. In several places Mr. Hammer distinctly admits that the secret doctrines of the Ishmaelites existed at Cairo.

There are good grounds for belief of the Sopheistic character of the Ishmaelites; and that however corrupted it may be, they still retain a remnant of the ancient Gnosis. They still remain in existence as a sect, and are scattered over extensive countries as far as India; they always have an Imàm at their head, and this Imàm, according to the doctrine of the Ishmaelites, is an incarnate ray of the Divinity, and is supposed to work miracles. Mr. Hammer says, "Les Ishmaelites vont en pélerinage des bords du Gange et de l'Indus pour recevoir à Khekh la bénédiction de leur Imàm," and he adds they are called "Souveidani," surely Soufidani or Sophees; he adds, "Ils sont ainsi appelés ceux là du nom d'un de leurs anciens Scheiks, ceux ci à cause de leur vénération pour le prophet Khiser (Elias) le gardien de la source de vie" (p. 331). Here we have the founder of the Essenes and of the Carmelites, Elias!

The most learned Mussulmen allow that there is an Esoteric Mohammedism, and this is Sopheism, which either as Buddhism from North India from the Afghans, or as a survival of Magianism has remained unto this day. The religion of the Mohammedan Sufis or Theosophists is nothing but a continuance of the doctrine of Wisdom, the eternal Wisdom-Religion, which existed thousands of years before the time of Mohammed.

It is worthy of observation that the ancient system seems to have been forgotten about the same time in India and Europe, and about the same time to run into all sorts of complicated machinery, an effect which naturally arose from a system shrouded in secrecy, before the art of writing was generally known; an effect which in our time is being reversed, for the ancient system is being daily brought again to light, and the doctrine of WISDOM once more begins to shine forth in all the radiant loveliness of its Divine effulgence as the Seals of Secrecy are opened one after the other by the art of writing which all now possess.

Thus the glad tidings are being spread far and wide in this age of making known, and the prophecy given to the hoary Daniel is now being fulfilled by the busy printing press and the rushing train: that "Knowledge should be increased, and many should run to and fro."

Alas! that the signs of the times should be still further accompanied and confirmed by the fulfilment of yet other predictions. "On the earth distress of nations"; "Wars and rumours of war"; "Earthquakes in divers places"; and "pestilence," in the shape of Cholera; with all the horrors consequent upon these tribulations!

And thus at the end of the predicted cycle the time, times, and half a time, the Eternal Evangel of Divine Wisdom, the heavenly Sophia, or THEOSOPHY, is again brought to remembrance, and even comes to us from that very India where it had been so mysteriously *forgotten* about the same time as in busy, rushing Europe, too much occupied with the things of time and the flying movement of its hurrying wheels to pay much heed to the higher light, destined eventually to aid it on its way by guiding it into all truth—until its more faithful guardians, the Oriental Adepts, hidden away in the calm silence of Himmalayan mountain fastnesses, first sent a gleam from the light of the long-lost Secret Doctrines through the darkness, which is quickly growing lighter and lighter, and will become more and more clear as it is answered from peak to peak, and from tower to tower, by the solitary watchers, who are the first to hail its dawn, and kindle their beacon lights, some at Hermetic Sources, and others at the still more spiritual light of the STAR CIRCLE.

CHAPTER X.

CHRISTIAN THEOSOPHY.

THE Spirit of Christian Theosophy is Christ Himself. It is a Spirit of Simplicity and Love, a Spirit of Truth, because combining devotion to Good, with that intuitional faith, which is Knowledge—a Light above all finite comprehension.

Although Christian Theosophy has as lofty an idealism as any Pagan philosophy of Esoteric origin, it prefers Practice to Theory, and those are not the only Christian Theosophists who live secluded in cloisters or deserts. There are as great teachers in Theosophy among the laity as among the clergy, and no other system can show so many Lay-Theosophists. "Be *in* the world but not *of* it;" for isolation is not local but spiritual. Be and do good, and aid and assist your fellow-beings in every possible way. This is the true practical Christian Spirit. Added to this, practise the Theosophy of Him who said, "I and my Father are one." Have we then any need of other systems to teach us the Divine and Absolute Truth?

There are numerous monasteries in the West, all founded for the implied object of Theosophy, yet how few real Theosophists are there to be found in them! The great Western Theosophists were not all within the folds of Mother Church. Many were hated and persecuted by her without cause, and branded, tortured, and destroyed as Heretics. It is quite possible that the greatest Saints may be those uncanonized by the Church.

Theosophy, a knowledge of God, either real or assumed, was the originating cause of nearly each and all of the many sects, schools, orders, and heresies that have more or less divided Christianity. The very assumed Infallibility of the Roman Catholic Church rests on a Theosophic assumption.*

The view ever adapts itself to the standpoint like a circumference to the centre, and is more or less extensive and comprehensive as the standpoint is more or less exalted and true. Each grasps according to his capacity; and as the Divine corresponds to the human, whoever would be a true Theosophist and not a fanatic counterfeit, should be a truly *human* being, for then he will be on the road to become a truly Divine being, when the Christ-Spirit shall be born in him of that Immaculate Virgin, his own Spiritual Soul.

Esoteric Christianity, the doctrine of Christ and the Apostles, is a system more practical than theoretical in its saintship. The Buddhist, to attain Nirvana, must become a monk or Samana, who does no material work whatever, he being so intent upon his own Salvation that he must leave the tilling of the material earth to others who are not to be saved just yet. So that if there were but two human beings on earth, and one became desirous to be saved, the other would have to practise self-denial for a while if he tilled the ground to supply the former with food.

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* Adepts assure us there is a state of Absolute Knowledge where error is impossible. The Theosophic assumption of Infallibility adopted by the Pope would infer that as Sovereign Pontiff of the Christian Church he is ever in that divinely inspired state.

The Jesus Christ of the Gospels was the first who, in the West, attempted to bring all to a true knowledge of God. He it is who is shown to us as being " very God and very Man," or as having plenary knowledge of the Divine; being truly human by being truly Divine. The Divine Soul-knowledge imparted by Christ was received and propagated by the Apostles, and the early Christian missionaries communicated the same Gnosis but on an easier, because more simple and perhaps holier, stage than that which the Buddhist missionaries had preached centuries before.

Not a creed, not a dogma, not a dead Saviour, but a living Christ, an absolute Truth, a positive knowledge of God, was the secret of their power and success.

Thus the Apostles and all early Missionaries were true Theosophists; they communicated what they *knew*, not what they merely *believed* to be true. All were true Gnostics, in as far as they spoke from a positive mystic experience; and even as the Christ was manifested to them would they have all mankind to be.

It was the simplicity of the idea—being based as we see upon mystic truth—that made Exoteric Christianity so popular with the masses, for whose requirement and comprehension, the abstruse Gnostic and occult truths had to be accommodated, that the Christ individuated Himself in every child of God.

Many early Christian missionaries did not understand the doctrines they taught in their inner meaning. Many then, as now, felt a call to preach, and to make others believe what they themselves did not rightly understand. Thus, while Christianity as an Exoteric and Orthodox Theology numerically increased, the Esoteric Christian Theosophy, the knowledge imparted by Christ and the Apostles, became more and more rare and occult, and the Church gaining in quantity lost in quality.

Every true Religion commenced with Theosophy; thus also the Christian. The knowledge of the few became the belief of the many. But in time the real God-knowers were supplanted by those who pretended to know, and Dogma took the place of Gnosis.

The Apostles were God-knowers, or Theosophists, and taught Theosophy, the knowledge of God, to the benighted Heathen. The modern missionaries, although they may have good intentions, are mostly God-ignorant men, and would spread their own ignorance even among such enlightened Heathen as the Buddhists.

How many converts Christianity made while animated by the Divine Spirit! How few can it prevail upon now with all its elaborate human institutions! The one essential want of the present missionaries is that very Theosophy or knowledge of God so plenary with the Apostles and the early Christian missionaries. But it is not true Christianity that the Heathen is presented with. Esoteric Christianity, the true Doctrine of Christ, being neglected by the Church, how can we expect modern Christian missionaries to know and teach it?

When Theology separated from Theosophy, it increased in quantity but decreased in value. It never could do away with all its Esoteric origin; although it substituted Dogma for Gnosis, there still remains a minute alloy of mystic gold mixed with the masses of baser metal, although Theologians know it not.

It was far easier for men to invent dogmas than to live the life of purity essential for the true Gnostic; and when it was found that there were so very few to contradict a bold assertion, these assertions increased wonderfully apace, until Religion became all assertion and no proof. Whenever a demand for knowledge or a non-orthodox counter assertion arose it was denounced as heretical, and councils of Ecclesiastics were convened for the express purpose of bringing out new dogmas such as Christ and the Apostles never heard of.

This policy is well-nigh played out. From the beginning were the words of Jesus partly misunderstood; but what was a slight error in the first centuries, which a moment's Esoteric explanation could clear away, grew into gigantic delusions when fostered by the mephitic exhalations of ignorance and fanaticism.

In place of the Gospel of Life there was invented a Gospel of Death. Instead of teaching the path to perfection, He who had laid down His life for the Truth was made a bar to the attainment of that

Truth. Therefore the Heretics arose, who asserted to have a better knowledge of God than the Ecclesiastics of the day. Although it is not upon historic record that a great Theosophical principle was ever fought for with war and bloodshed by the Theosophists, who, however persecuted they may be, fight with other weapons than those of brute-force; we nevertheless can trace Theosophy to have been the primary cause of many historical events.

Those comparatively few men and women who, in the ages of pseudo-orthodoxy, dared to think for themselves, were indeed the cause of the continuation of the Church, which, for want of opposition, would have expired in plethoric inanition. There were more Theosophists against than for the official Church, and these really performed the work which the Hierarchy pretended to do, namely, that of guiding the searching minds from the fallible finite phenomenal, to the absolute and infinite noumenal realms of existence. It was in vain that the so-called Orthodox teachers brought their most powerful arguments to bear upon the thinking few. The convincing logic of the rack, the conclusive proof of the stake, the brilliant rhetoric of breaking on the wheel, and numerous similarly mild arguments *ad hominem*, even when applied with the best intentions, had no other results than the death of the persecuted still giving the lie to the claims of the official Hierarchy.

Should it be objected that *autos de fé*, the rack and tortures of all kinds, were in keeping with the civilization of that period, we would suggest that, as all human beings have nerves, and consequently were as sentient then as now, the non-civilization of an age is not an excuse for, but an accusation against, that institution which pretended to civilize and to guide men to God, while in reality its adherents were not honest in their professions, and hated to be doubted and questioned.

It is sad that the interests of the Church and of Humanity should be at variance, for the Church should be the great educator of the human race. It was not to the welfare of humanity that the most sincere and honest thinkers were tortured and destroyed, while the insincere and dishonest sat in places of honour.

Neither is it to the interests of humanity that ignorance and perversion should be so impressed on the plastic mind, that it demands, even under favourable circumstances, half a life-time to obliterate the effects of early miseducation.

But whatever may be the asserted faults of the Christian Church, she has not followed the footsteps of the ancient Heathen Hierarchies, who made God their Secret. The Christian Church has never preached the Demon to mankind and kept God to herself. If the Christian priests preach a delusion, it is because they too are deluded through having lost the Great Arcanum of true Esoteric Christianity, of which the Church of Rome, nevertheless, asserts to have the sole tradition.

The Church of Rome has always been consistent in that respect, and has never compromised, ever affirming to be the only Church of God, and that there was no other. That she could not always prove her pretensions is the fault of the men who had possession of the Church, but not the fault of the Church.

The Church had to be recruited from the people; and as there was no leading family or tribe entrusted with the tradition, the Theosophic Sanctuary was soon blocked up by mere popular ignorance. Dogma, no doubt in itself a good thing when competently ennunciated, ousted Gnosis, as it was found more convenient to assert when there was no one to challenge the assertion. The Esoteric origin that gave birth to Exoteric Christianity became gradually forgotten and at length unknown, and thus the shell was treasured while the kernel was neglected.

We attack not the Church; on the contrary, we explain that the cruelties committed by the Inquisition, horrible and totally indefensible as they were, must not be imputed to the Church, even if sanctioned by the highest in ecclesiastic rank of the time, but to the sinful and misguided individuals who instituted and perpetrated them, and who will doubtless suffer for ages the incalculable evil they inflicted upon the human race. Such acts belonged to the Spirit of a cruel age, and not by any means to the inspiration of the Christian Church, whose true mission is one of Love and Mercy.

Let us, therefore, not lightly join in the common cry, but let us sift the acts of the individuals from those of the cause they represented, and instead of giving credence to the materialistic Panacea, "abolish the God-idea." We plead for another and truer remedy: "Let God be truly known."

It is a great and glorious fact that the Church could in every age raise up her myriads who *professed* to devote their life to God. It is true all were not sincere in their profession; but we repeat, whose fault was it,—that of the Church, or of the men who were in possession of the Church?

The Church is a most important and necessary congregation, and should be a concentration of the unselfish and spiritual against the selfish and worldly-minded. As the Church is the great educator of humanity, we deny that her occupation is gone, but affirm rather that a true and divine Church is now more than ever wanted; and, therefore, if the existing Church is to be regenerated, all who claim to be on the side of Light, against the powers of Darkness, should unite with her. The Church is God's window; but of what use can it be to struggling souls if it is so obscured by the dust of ages, and hung over with spiders' webs, that the sunlight of to-day (the sunlight of the Holy Spirit ever shining) can no longer penetrate through that much-encumbered window? Alas! how thick becomes the darkness unless we are guided each day by the Light of the Spirit of Truth, for the avenues of the Spirit become easily clogged, and inspiration ceases.

It is only in this wise that a true reformation can be arrived at. Not by attack, but by support; not by enmity, but by friendship; not by leaving the Church a refuge for the weak-minded, but by the noblest minds lending their aid in the mission of educating mankind for eternity.

Ye who assume to have a knowledge that is above the cognizance of the masses, hold not aloof from the contest that is now being fought for man's soul, but come and join us, and let your presence ennoble the base, and enlarge the views of the little-minded, and by your leaven we shall leaven the mass. The highest minds should become the allies of the Theosophical Church that must be founded upon the true teachings of Love and Wisdom as manifested by Christ, that they may help to renew her Eternal Truths. We cannot cling to all Mother-Church interpretations with one hand, and dwell within the temple of Universal Truth sowing the seeds of eternal progress with the other. True, she is our Mother, and therefore we respect and revere her; but old age is upon her, and as change is written upon all institutions, so she too must change and give place to that renewal of Divine Truth which will serve the children's highest interests better, for the Church is bound to be a Dispenser of God's bounty.

Ye who are loud in clamours to destroy, have you something better wherewith to replace what you would destroy? Should the "God-idea," which has been the consolation to innumerable souls, be destroyed, will your "No-God" idea mend matters, or will it not rather be the destruction of the human race? Will not man, when he has lost all ideas of responsibility, and is told that most infamous untruth that there is no life but the present, and no hope, no beyond, become an unchained wild beast, and in his insane rage to enjoy the present, destroy what he would enjoy, and ruin himself spiritually for untold and untellable ages?

O wonderful "No-God" of the Atheists and Materialists, thou hast no love, no justice, no reason; thou hast not even an existence; thou art nothing but stone-blind force, and by thy stone-blindness, thy injustice, thy unreason, and thy very non-existence, this wonderful universe—as *wonderful in every microscopic particle as in each solar system*—this stupendous All, is incomprehensibly sustained. Not by Reason, but by Unreason; not by a Supreme Intelligence, but by a Supreme Unintelligence; not by an Absolute Existence, but by an Absolute Non-Existence!

Oh, stupendous monument of ridiculous absurdity, and unparalleled assumption of wisdom! If it pleases the master-minds of this century to believe in unbelief; if non-consolation consoles them, what can we possibly say to such wise and learned folly!!

The Mysterion of the Jews, the Messiah, was and is that Mystic Divine Being inculcated in allegory by the Initiates of all nations. The Egyptians, Hindus, Persians, Greeks, Druids, Semits, and others, had their mystic myths, wherein the life of an individual hero (who may be an historical or an ideal being) delineates the course of Divine Re-birth. These mythic, or rather mystic, characters were foreshadowings of that great and Divine substance that in Christ Jesus was plenarily manifested. Thus to the Apostles and early Christian Theosophers Jesus is the Messiah, Christ, or Saviour, who came not to destroy, but to fulfil the Mystic Law; and the fundamental doctrine of the Christian system is the Divine Incarnation, or Christ coming in the flesh. (See Isaiah ii.)

In that very Christ, attainable to us all, God becomes incarnate once and for ever as the Divine Law of Regeneration. The historical and Exoteric Christ-Individual foreshadowing the mystic and Esoteric Christ-Being. As God was in Jesus so may the Christ, who is God, be in us, and the Christ-Life delineates what the Word teaches—the Law of Salvation whereby we can overcome the perverse Demon within us. For if God is within us, so is His antitype the Demon, and Hell must be passed through before Heaven can be attained.

To the Universal Theosophist Jesus is *a* Christ, while to the Christian Theosophist Jesus is *the* Christ. The former asserts that there have been many Divine Incarnations; the latter affirms only one, and that one to be Christ Jesus, the representative of Adonai.

All true Theosophists, however, agree that the Christ or Divine Spirit must be born and individualized in every living Soul, and therefore the Divine Incarnation, Divine Being, or Christ, would be one for all. Qualitatively one, and quantitatively many, though at the same time it can with equal truth be declared to be quantitatively one, and qualitatively various; or one state of blessedness or Nirvana for all beings, although each may experience it differently. Thus, though the manifestations may be many, the Christ-Incarnation is mystically one; but that one is to be made manifest in all who truly believe, and live the Christ-life; and it is of the utmost importance to know and understand that Christ must not merely be for us, but that Christ must be *in* us.

As persistently as the orthodox Exoteric Christian asserts the Gospel to be history, have certain Theosophists from the time of Origen, if not before, declared the whole relation to point to a great Mystic Allegory—an Hermetic Myth; and certainly, upon reading and studying attentively Philo's interpretation of the Hebrew Scriptures, and Origen's exposition of the New Testament, the historical foundation of the Scriptures would seem to melt into thin air, while many of the apparent absurdities of the latter are, when rightly interpreted, no more absurd, but appear in their true light as abstruse Hermetic wisdom. It was the simplicity of the idea that made Exoteric Christianity popular, while the abstruse Esoteric truths could not be accepted by the masses. "The Son of God died for my sins," is far more pleasing to an ordinary mind than the truth that he must die to his sins in order to become a true Son of God.

Jesus, imparting the true Gnosis or knowledge of God to those who for generations had been deluded by sacrificial perversions of religion, was with necessary emphasis regarded by His disciples as very God and very Man—the Divine Light becoming manifested to those who sat in darkness. For He and no other had shown Himself to be to them the Way, the Truth, and the Life; yea, as He said, He was indeed the Door by which they entered the Divine kingdom, and whereby they attained to a union with Himself and with the Father who is in Heaven.

To understand the words of the Apostles one must be a true Theosophist, and know what they knew. For the Doctrine of Christ, the Apostles, and early Christians is Theosophy, and not the Exoteric dogma subsequently inaugurated in ages of spiritual darkness.

Exoteric Orthodox Theology, indebted as it is even for its very name to Theosophy—for that alone is the only true Ortho-Doxy or Right Doctrine (of the Word)—cannot maintain the vastness of its pretensions, as its assertion to be the only right way irreconcilably contradicts every other orthodoxy. Thus there is a Brahmin, Moslem, Jewish, Protestant, Buddhistic, and Roman Catholic Orthodoxy, each of which asserts to be the only true ortho-Orthodoxy, but they all fail to recognise that they are only branches of the one vast tree of universal Theosophy.

As we have said, the Spirit of Christian Theosophy is Christ Himself; therefore Christian Theosophy has not only as lofty an ideal as any other Theosophy of Esoteric origin, but the Christ is the idea which really lies at the foundation of the Esoterism of all religions. It is in fact the foundation stone on which all religions have been built: "the head stone of the corner" of the Human Temple not made with hands, but built up on earth as the Son of Man, a noble edifice which will at last rise above the things of earth and be re-united to the Divine Source through its Spiritual Soul, which immaculately conceives the Christ Spirit. And thus the Christ individuates Himself in every perfected man, crowning him with that perfection that constitutes him henceforth a Son of God, and unites him to his Father in Heaven.

This "Head Stone of the Corner," as Christ was so often called, was represented, as we know, in the very earliest times of which we have any record, as the Stone which the ignorant builders refused, but which the master builder nevertheless placed at the top of the Great Pyramid; that Pillar of witness to the Lord on the borders of the land of Egypt, or darkness, (Isaiah xix. 19, 20.) whose prophetic significance in *this* the fulness of time, and not a day sooner, has been pointed out to us by those who have very evidently been guided to act as instruments in the Divine Revelation.*

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* "The stones required for building the Great Pyramid were evidently, from the quarry marks still legible upon some of them, prepared at the quarries according to the order of the architect. For the vast majority of the stones nothing but one unvarying figure was required. But amongst them, and different therefrom, *one* was ordered which did not chime in with any of the Egyptian building notions, certainly not of their temples, tombs, or palaces. . . . . such a stone was of course '*a stone of stumbling,*' and a '*rock of offence,*' to builders whose heads did not understand the work they were engaged upon. It was to them the pointed stone which '*whosoever shall fall on shall be broken,*' and

The head-stone of the corner, thus pointing heavenwards, like the *Key-stone* of the Royal Arch Mason, symbolises the Christ Spirit in man, (who is the Temple not made with hands, "*the Temple of the Living God, which Temple ye are*,") when that Spirit shall have descended upon you from on high; as the dove descended on the Head of Christ at His Initiation, or symbolic

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so huge a stone as a coping for the vast structure of the whole Great Pyramid, that '*on whomsoever it shall fall it will grind him to powder*.' (Matt. xxi.)

"From a practical worker like St. Paul, we have even a most methodical illustration in the use which he makes of certain constructive differences between the four lower corner-stones and the single corner-stone above; constructive differences which, if applicable to any other building at all, are only fully applicable to the wonderful Great Pyramid; for his words are—

"'Ye are fellow-citizens with the saints, and of the household of God; and are built upon the *foundation* of the apostles and prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being *the chief corner-stone; in whom all the building fitly framed together groweth into an holy temple in the Lord*.' (Ephes ii. 19—22.)

"This same noble figurative employment of that particular topmost stone,—viz., its representation of the Christ and His crowning the scheme of the redemption of man—is one frequently employed in Holy Scripture; as in Psalm cxviii. 22, in the Gospels, and the Epistles (*Matt. xxi.* 19., *Mark xii.* 10., *Luke xx.* 17., *Acts iv.* 11, 1 *Peter ii.* 4.) The stone is there alluded to not only as the chief corner-stone, '*elect and precious*,' made 'the *head* of the corner' (which is only perfectly and pre-eminently true of the topmost angle of a pyramid), but as having been for a long time 'disallowed by the builders,' and existing only as '*a stone of stumbling and a rock of offence to them*.'

"The simile is easily and perfectly applicable to our Saviour's appearance on earth; yet evidently, from the very principle of all such figurative allusions, a something bearing on the nature of the figure made use of had been existing on the earth before; or it would never have been employed.

Baptism *with water* (*and the Spirit* †). This Spirit is born in man when sufficiently developed through earthly evolution to attain unto the Spiritual Soul, or *Sixth Principle,*—the Mary,—of which is born the Christ Spirit in man, who is finally to crush the head of the serpent, the symbol of earthly generation and materialism. Christ Himself being the symbol of the heavenly, or spiritual-regeneration.

For the Christ Spirit is "the seed of the *woman*" (Soul is ever understood as feminine, Spirit as masculine), the Child of Mary; herself the mystical representative of the Heavenly Divine Wisdom, She "who was with God from the beginning," as the Roman Catholic Church knows full well, when she has adopted this eighth chapter of Proverbs for the Epistle of the 8th day of December, the Feast of The Immaculate Conception of the Blessed Virgin, whose Nativity is celebrated on the 8th day of September, nine months later on.

Theosophy is a knowledge of the Divine Wisdom

"Now we know that the Great Pyramid did stand on its desert hill before any of the inspired authors wrote; and also, that they seem to have been spiritually conversant with many principles of its construction, although they were not visitors to the land of Egypt; and it is they who allude to some notorious objections by the builders against the head corner-stone, while their work was in progress."—("Our Inheritance in the Great Pyramid," Chapter xxiii, page 441, by Prof. Piazzi Smyth, F.R.S.E., F.R.A.S., Astronomer Royal for Scotland).

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† Christ glorified not Himself to *be made High Priest,* but He that said unto Him: "Thou art My Son; *to-day have I begotten Thee*" (Hebrews v. 5). "Thou art a Priest for ever after the order of Melchizedec (6th verse).

Itself, or Herself, (THEO-SOPHIA). This truth we again repeat, as we wish to impress upon the minds of our readers that it is the fundamental and regenerative portion of every true religion. Theology is the man-made science, or system, growing out of it, and standing to it in the same relation as that which every other science stands to its subject: as, for instance, natural philosophy to matter, metaphysics to mind, philology to language, etc.

Theosophically, then, the Gospels are the histories of an inward and re-generating Principle, called the only begotten Son of God, which is the Saviour of humanity, for it redeems man from the prison house, of earth; and the development in him of this Principle transforms the Son of Man into the Son of God. Call it the Spirit of Truth, or call it Love, or Life; or call it Wisdom, the Logos, or the sixth Principle in man, as do the Buddhists; or the Key-stone of the Arch, as do the Royal Arch Masons; or the Head-stone of the Corner, as do the Scriptures in certain places: it is always the highest state to which man can attain. It is in fact "*to put on Christ.*"

"When Jesus came into the coasts of Cesarea Philippi He asked His disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I, the Son of Man am? And they said, Some say that Thou art John the Baptist; some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. And Jesus answered and said unto him, Blessed art thou, Simon Barjona: for flesh and blood hath not revealed it unto thee, but My Father which is in heaven. And I say also unto thee, that thou art Peter, and upon this rock I will build My church (Matthew xvi. 13).

Here again we are told that the Church is built on a rock, and this rock *the truth*, as contained in the confession of faith of Peter, who in consequence of having made it was then and there "called by a new name," Petrus, Pierre, or a *Stone.* Peter was also called Céphas, which in Hebrew means a stone.

For us this Rock is the Christ, the *Way*, the *Truth*, and the *Life*. It is also called the *Door*, for it is the only one that will open to us the courts of the heavenly kingdom of our Father. Through that door all must pass, as we have seen, both Jew, and Gentile, Buddhist, Pagan, Druid, Parsi and Mohammedan, all must drink of the waters of that Living Rock that followed them; and that Rock is Christ.

To the Gospel writers Christ was the invisible Holy One of Israel seen through the veil of the Old Testament; not merely the Spirit of the Old Testament, but Life itself that was before Abraham, or as Christ called it, the Spirit of Truth that should lead us the way to Himself, and guide us into all truth. The Spirit of Truth was buried then, as it is now buried, in forms and ceremonies; or enshrined and entombed in traditions, or past histories; but Christian Theosophists see the truth under the letter, and through the outward traditional history of a past earthly life.

This was the secret of those earlier Theosophists the Essenes, and was regarded as a great mystery, called the "*Mystery of Christ*," because it is certainly not of a nature to be communicated by any external process, for it must be felt and lived before it can be spiritually understood. Until then it can only be read in sacred story, or gazed at in pictures on the wall, or dimly seen in some sculptured form of inspired art. The members of the Secret Brethren speak of *their Secret* at the present day amongst themselves, but they only wrote of it in allegory and symbolism in obedience to their solemn oath.

But there are very many who do not, and cannot, accept this ecclesiastical view of the Divine Incarnation, and with whom it is always a question of grave anxiety, and a problem they fain would, but find they cannot, solve. Outside the churches they are met by many with the assertion that Jesus Christ was an allegorical personage altogether, and that the Gospels are not historical, but mystical relations, not biographical but allegorical; and that under the short but intensely interesting story of an individual example—they were intended to present and show forth principles, states, and processes which are spiritual and appeal to the Soul; and do not therefore deal with persons, places, times, and events on the physical plane, but with qualities, processes, phases, and states, on the interior and spiritual plane.

Now, although they see that there is much plausibility in this view of the subject, and indeed that it is so true it is impossible to deny it, and therefore that they are bound to retain and hold fast to it, yet it does not wholly satisfy their feelings or entirely seem to meet their want of a personal Saviour, to whom they have become accustomed to cling in consequence of the early orthodox teaching they have received. Thus, to the Exoteric, and so-called orthodox

Christian, the historical Jesus is *the* Christ by whose vicarious sacrifice they expect to be saved, if they will ONLY *believe* in Him, and *call upon Him* in their hour of need.

The Exoteric Christian considers Jesus as the immediate Son of the great God Himself, the great Spirit, the I AM, who took upon Himself the nature of man at one particular period of the world's history, becoming incarnate in human form, in order to ransom the children of earth from his Father's wrath, by offering himself instead, as a vicarious sacrifice.

To the Christian Theosophist Jesus is a *manifestation* of "Adonai," the Christ, or Christ Spirit, of whom there have been many Divine Incarnations on this earth, and He the fullest and most perfect. They believe Him to be the guiding and guardian Protector of this planet during His particular cycle, and that in coming to it He comes to His own, not only to instruct, but to give a fresh impulse at the end of certain periods of 600 years, called Neroses, or Naronic Cycles; and if therefore it could be proved by those who so assert, that Jesus is only a mythical and not an historical personality, the whole theory of the Naronic Cycles founded on astronomical science which is to be found in the doctrines of every ancient creed and country all over the civilized earth, would fall to the ground, and proved after millions of ages to be but a vain delusion.*

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* It is often asserted that only two historical mentions can be produced in proof of the earthly existence of Christ, and those

After all, why should the opponents of Christianity be so anxious to deny the personality of the historic Jesus, the Divine manifestation in the West, when they make no difficulty in admitting the existence of Cyrus, and Buddha, and Cristna, and Fo, and Mohammed, and of all the others that have successively performed their Divine Mission of Mercy and Salvation in the East. Is it because that of Jesus is proclaimed to have been a fuller, a more plenary and saving mission, coming as He did as the Mediator of a New Covenant, to add a New Commandment to the Decalogue, and therefore to infuse fresh vitality, or life-blood, into Humanity? Is it because it is said He descended to the very depths, even into Hades, to preach deliverance to those who were still captives in that intermediate state?—For are we not told that David himself had not yet ascended into the heavens (Acts ii. 34), and this because the Christ had not yet been born of him, or *in* him, although he had received the promise,

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the very slight ones contained in Tacitus and in Josephus, the latter of which is *supposed* to be apocryphal. To these we desire to add two others which we have come across in the course of extensive reading. These accidental notices in two Jewish works will be found unexceptionable proof of His existence; unexceptionable because, if it be not the evidence of unwilling witnesses, it is the evidence of disinterested ones. Thus the MIDRASHKOHELETH, or gloss upon Ecclesiastes says: "It happened that a serpent bit R. Eleasar ben Damah, and James, a man of the village Secania, came to heal him 'in the name of Jesus ben Panther.'" This statement is likewise to be found in the book called ABODAZARA, where the comment upon it says, "*This* James was a disciple of Jesus the Nazarene."

Mr. Faber says, "Jesus was not called originally Jesus Christ, and "the *ways of life* had been made known to him." (Acts ii. 28.)

> "Therefore being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, He would raise up Christ to sit on His throne; He seeing this before, spake of the resurrection of Christ, that His Soul was not left in hell (Hades), neither His flesh did see corruption." (Acts ii. 30, 31).

How different does this promise read to the Theosophist, in the *Esoteric* sense, as the Christ who was to save *his*, *David's*, own soul from Hades, when He should be born of *him*, according to the flesh (therefore of his own *individuality*, and sit on his throne, as the Saviour of his own Spiritual Kingdom; according to "*the ways of Life* which had been made known to him"), to what it reads when taken in the literal sense, or according to the letter, as the Jews took it, when they crucified the ONE who came "to bear witness to the Truth." Nay, as they take it now, when they are

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but Jescua Hammassiah. Jescua is the same as Joshua and Jesus, and means Saviour; and Ham is evidently the Om of India (the *Ammon*), and Messiah is the *Anointed*. It will then be *the Saviour Om, the Anointed;* precisely as Isaiah had literally foretold: or, reading in the Hebrew mode, *the Anointed Om, the Saviour*. This was the Name of Jesus of Bethlehem. His Name was also JESUS BEN PANTHER. Jesus was a very common name with the Jews." In another place he says, "It is remarkable that the patronymic of Jesus Christ was Panther; and that Panthers were the nurses and bringers up of Bacchus. Panther was the name of our Lord's foster father."

To this we may add that *Pantheism* maintains the Universe to be the outward vesture or manifestation of God; and we know that a *Pantheon* was a Temple dedicated to *all* the Gods, innumerable as the spots on the *Panther's* skin.

still expecting an earthly King, to sit on a vanished throne. As if the promise of God could ever concern the fleeting things of time and materiality.

Essentially as Life the Christ is an impersonal State; and to say that there is no living reality except as visibly embodied, would be to deny the existence of the great I AM Himself, or see Him only in visible nature. Christ is the Power and Wisdom and Goodness of the Son made manifest, first of all in the Man Christ Jesus, who came as the "Mediator of the New Covenant" to "*bear witness to the Truth*,"* and ultimately and everlastingly in all who truly believe in, and receive Him in themselves, and live His life, according to the promise made known to David as "*the ways of life*." Thus as Redeemer and Saviour He is far more than a mere historical personage, being a Spiritual Divine and Eternal Verity; the only truly *Begotten* Son of the Father; the WORD of God (therefore the proceeding), "begotten before all worlds."

> "All things were made by Him; and without Him was not anything made that was made. In Him is Life; and the Life is the light of men. And the light shineth in darkness; but the darkness comprehended it not. He was in the world, and the world was made by Him, and the world knew Him not. He came unto His own, and His own received Him not. But as many as received Him, to them gave He power to become the Sons of God, even to them that believe on His name (nature): which were born, *not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God*." (St. John i. 3 to 5 and 10 to 13.)

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* "Jesus answered, Thou sayest that I am a king. To this end was I born, and for this cause came I into the world, that I should bear witness unto the truth. Every one that is of the truth heareth my voice." (John xviii. 37.)

Christ and the Gospels are indeed THE KEY to the mystery of the creation of man; his past, present, future, and eternal being. His nature, why, and when created, and how, and for what purpose. To show us who and what God the everlasting, self-existent, and glorious Being really is—what His Nature, and how He manifests Himself in Light, Life, Love; in Wisdom, Truth, Goodness, Meekness, Simplicity, in Sorrow and Sympathy, Holiness, Tenderness, Grace, and Power; what the WORD is that is TRUTH, and how all this mighty power in love and gentleness can effectually operate in the spirit and being of man. How man is redeemed from the fall, what that fall was; what life and death are, and what these are intended and made to bring about; who and what is the principle and being of that which is called the devil and Satan; and how all this seeming antagonism works together to make *manifest* the hidden power and wisdom of Deity. What is Time and Space; what Eternity, and so on. All this and infinitely more Christ the Son (Son of Man, and Son of God) explained, and made known to us in the Scriptures, not as read in the Letter, or merely as matter of history, but as of a deep spiritual Esoteric signification.

And the true and universal Theosophist clearly sees that pure Buddhism in its fundamental teachings in no wise differs from pure Christianity, and that Esoteric religion, or Theosophy, is the same throughout all time and conditions, because Divine Truth is ONE and Eternal. All religions have the One Great Secret, though they may call it by different names, and that Secret is "*the mystery of the Christ,*" the "Seed of the Woman" (the Spiritual Soul) conceived of the Holy Spirit, therefore truly the Son of God. Some have lost the key to this mystery, like the Masons who have lost the Word, and they are not likely to find it so long as they confine their Fraternity exclusively to one sex, that which represents the Intellect; for the word which is now lost, was confided only to a woman (perhaps the Queen of Sheba), namely, to the Intuition which is feminine. The Story of Hiram Abiff is that of the Divine Spirit, the Son of the Widow, or Spiritual Soul, which in undeveloped and material conditions is separated from her Divine source, thus widowed; the three fellow-craft's-men who slay him are the three lower principles, viz., the Body, the Ego, and the animal or earthly Soul. It is the woman who is to bruise the head of this serpent; in other words, INTUITION, who is to restore the lost Word.

This innermost Spirit, "the Mystery of God kept secret from the beginning of the world," designated *The Christ*, and generally called "the Son of God," was the Saviour of Jesus,* and must be the Saviour of all men. It was *the Christ* in Jesus who said to the Father: "I in them, and Thou in Me, that they all may be made perfect in One; and that the world may know that Thou hast sent Me and *hast loved them, as Thou hast* loved Me." (John xvii. 23.)

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* "For in all things it behoved Him to be made *like unto His brethren.*" (Hebrews ii. 17.) And we read "He was *made perfect through suffering.*" (Hebrews ii. 10.)

Now this Divine Mystery, the Secret of the Sonship of the "Christ Spirit," and the Fatherhood of God "The Great Spirit" (as He is beautifully called by the North American Indians), is not only held in all religions, although not openly taught, or taught only in a distorted form, but was Esoterically written on the glowing pages of the earliest revelation given to man, before even the first rude hieroglyphs had been invented by him wherewith to transcribe those good tidings shadowed forth in brilliant imagery in

"The starry scriptures of the skies."

and the history of Hercules, (the personification of the *Spiritual* Sun, who, like the solar orb, performs twelve labours, one for each celestial sign,) and that of Jesus Christ, is so close that the Rev. Mr. Faber has been obliged to admit that Hercules was a type of what the Saviour was to do and to suffer. He says as follows:

> "On the Sphere he (Hercules) is represented in the act of contending with the serpent, the head of which is placed under his foot; and this serpent, we are told, is that which guarded the tree with golden fruit in the *midst* of the Garden of the Hesperides. And the Garden of the Hesperides was no other than *the Garden of Paradise.* Consequently the serpent of *that* Garden, the head of which is crushed beneath the heel of Hercules, and which is described as enclosing within its folds the trunk of the mysterious Tree of Life, must necessarily be a transcript of that serpent whose form was assumed by the tempter of our first parents. We may observe the same ancient tradition in the Phœnician fable respecting Ophion and Ophiuchus."

All this about the Garden of Paradise; and the serpent of *that* garden, and the Tree of Life, is still so Esoteric that we *dare* not at present unveil it; nay, were we to do so we should again be obliged to conceal, by *re-veiling* it with another Letter; for it *cannot* be openly revealed, those who belong to the Temple of Wisdom, *i.e.*, all true Theosophists, have already seized the Key—which must be *taken* by the Initiate, for it cannot be given; the Sixth Sense is here required, which is a spiritual sense, that of the Intuition.

A less orthodox authority than the Rev. Mr. Faber, but one who has done very much to revolutionise men's minds, Monsieur Dupuis, has shown the life and labours of Hercules on the Celestial Sphere in a manner which admits of no dispute; and that Hercules is the Hericlo, the Saviour of the Neros 600. "There can be no doubt," says Higgins in the "Anacalypsis," "that the history of Cristna is the history of the Equinoctial Sun in Aries, and that of Buddha was the Equinoctial Sun in Taurus; Buddha was Bacchus, Cristna was Hercules, in reality one 2160 years after the other."

But long before M. Dupuis' time it was said by that learned Spaniard, Alphonso the Great, that the adventures of Jesus are all depicted in the Constellations; and this agrees with what Jacob is reported to have said, that the fortunes of his family were read in the stars; and also with what Isaiah said, that the heavens were a book. This was really believed by some of the Kabbalists who divided the stars into letters. There is little doubt, as King Alphonso was so famous for his learning, that his speech alluded to the Messiah of each cycle, and that the Zodiacs of Esné and Dendera are of the nature of perpetual calendars for the cycles of 600 and 666 years.

Buddha as well as Cristna, or Krishna, means Shepherd. It is evident, both of them being Avatars, or Sun Messengers, mystically and astrologically speaking, that their year was 600 years long, therefore the birthdays of both returned on the same day (25th December) every 600 years, when the Phen or Phoenix was consumed on the altar of the Temple of the Sun at Heliopolis in Egypt, and rose from its ashes to new life.

The Sun, Solar fire, or rather, that higher Principle known by the name of the Creative Being, that Lord of Lords, and Focus of Light, the Divine Sun, whom we call GOD, or GOOD, of whom the Solar Orb is the fitting emblem, (dispensing as it does physical light, life, and heat to the material, as that Divine Sun does to the Spiritual World,) was considered to send forth an Avatar, Messenger, or Saviour every 600 years, to revive the drooping faith of humanity, and unveil a little more of the Eternal Truth, in accordance with the further development of men's minds; and this was called a New Revelation, from the Latin verb *Re-velare*, to re-veil. At all events the advent of these Messengers has ever been the cause of a change of religion, a New Dispensation in fact; and upon one of these the Christian world is even now entering, eighteen hundred years after the coming of its founder;

therefore the third Naronic Messenger since Christ, is now due, and already gives signs of His presence amongst us. The two intervening Avatars came not to Christian lands or Christian churches, which have been left pretty much to their own devices during the period, and have fought, and tortured, and burnt, and quarrelled their way through it in the very edifying and brotherly way that the history of the last eighteen hundred years will record! Time is it indeed that the New Avatar should come, He who was predicted and promised by Christ, even "The Spirit of Truth the Comforter," who would take of His teachings, and bring them all to our remembrance. Thus the time of making known; and those who are living on the high mountain peaks, and many who are solitary watchers on the topmost towers, already know of His, or of Her approach, for they alone see the brightness of the glorious dawn already flooding the darkness of the long night nigh spent, and which will disappear before Her rising, and have heard the cock crow which heralds the dawn of the New Day.—"Our Lady of Light," *Anno Dominæ*; for we are led to believe that the New Dispensation will be of feminine import, the coming of the Bride from Heaven, or let us at once say, the Advent of the *Spiritual Soul* in humanity; thus the manifestation of the *sons* and *daughters* of God.

Whilst the Sun was in Taurus the different incarnations under whatever name they might be were all considered but as an incarnation of Buddha or Taurus; when the Sun passed into Aries they were in like manner considered as incarnations of Cristna, or Aries, the Lamb of God. Of the Avatar of the eighth age it is written (Isaiah xlv. 1): "*Thus saith the Lord to His Anointed* (His Messiah), *to Cyrus*, whose right hand I have holden to subdue nations." Here it may be observed that if any doubt the existence of Joshua or Abraham, and believe them to be entirely allegorical, they cannot well doubt the existence of Cyrus. The eighth period began about the Babylonian Captivity, and about 600 years before Christ. The ninth began with Jesus Christ, making in all eight cycles before Christ.

> "The calculation of the age of the world before Christ, according to Eusebius, ending exactly with the Siamese Cycle, is very curious. On the birth of Christ the Eastern astrologers, who, according to the two disputed chapters in Matthew and Luke, had calculated his Nativity, came to Bethlehem, or the Temple of CERES, where Adonis or Adonai was adored, to make him the Solar offerings, as Isaiah, according to the same disputed chapter, had foretold. This prophecy, however, *literally expresses* that it alludes to *Cyrus;* but no doubt the double sense is justified in one point of view, as Isaiah's prediction relating to the *next* coming cycle would in a considerable degree apply to every new revolving cycle as it arose."

The Rev. Mr. Faber believed MELCHIZEDEC to be *an Incarnation of the Son of God.* Now we read in Hebrews vii. 1-3 that this Melchizedec, the Priest of the Most High God, "was without Father, without Mother, without descent, having neither beginning of days nor end of life, but, made like unto the Son of God, abideth a Priest continually." Other Priests have to deal with the local and the temporal aspect of Spiritual things, whereas the Priests after the Order of Melchizedec are beyond and above, and they deal with the eternal and unchanging aspect of Truth. That Melchizedec was without beginning of days or end of life signifies that the form of truth which is given to the world from Angelic Spheres relates to the eternal principles of right, which have no beginning and no end, which will be for ever and for ever the same—the eternal abiding right. This is the Order of Melchizedec, the Order of the Soul into which those in truly Spiritual life are introduced who have outgrown the necessity of looking at any temporal aspects of truth according to this or that creed in which they may have been educated. The Rev. Mr. Faber also says:

> "It was contended that every *extraordinary* personage, whose office was to reclaim or to punish mankind, was an Avatar, or descent of the Godhead." And again "Adam and Enoch and Noah might in outward appearance be *different* men, but they were really the *self-same* Divine persons who had been promised as the seed of the woman successively animating various human bodies."—(Vol. iii., pp. 612, 613.)

The Brahmins, not being able to conceal the Buddhic doctrines in some of their temples without their entire destruction, are obliged to admit a ninth Buddhic Avatar, at the same time that they most absolutely maintain that this Buddha, this ninth Avatar, was an impostor.

> "It is singular enough," says Godfrey Higgins, in his "Anacalypsis," "that the Buddha in the cave at Ellora is called the Lord paramount, the MAHA-MAHADEO, the Great God. At this temple the Brahmin utters the name BUDDHA without hesitation, which is what a Brahmin will seldom do. *Their* ninth Avatar was a Buddha, because he was an incarnation of Divine Wisdom, perhaps not understood by modern Brahmins. The Brahmins

and Buddhists have each the same number of Avatars; and at the time of Jesus Christ they both say that eight were gone, and that the ninth then came among *them*, and was called Salivan. But then they allege that this ninth was an impostor."

Sir William Jones clearly proved that Dionysius and Rama were the same, and that the first Buddha was Woden, Mercury, and Fo. Mr. Faber says:—

> "The Egyptian cosmogony, like the Phœnician, is professedly of the Buddhic School: for the fullest account which we have of it is contained in a book ascribed to Hermes or Thoth; but Hermes or Thoth is the same person as Taut, who is said to have drawn up the Phœnician system; and Taut again is the same as he Oriental Tat or Buddha."—(Vol. i., p. 228.)

No doubt that what applied to one applied to all; with this one exception, perhaps, that one might be the Sun in Taurus the other the Sun in Aries. Whilst the Sun was in Taurus the different incarnations under whatever name they might be were all considered but as an incarnation of Buddha or Taurus. When the Sun passed into Aries they were in like manner considered as incarnations of Cristna or Aries, the Lamb of God. And has not our own Christ, who is also called "*the Lamb of God*," foretold His own Second Coming? We are assured that the blood of Christ is to cleanse us from all sin, and we know that "*the blood is the life;*" surely then this mysterious saying must mean, that to lead *the Christ life* will save us from all sin; and this will also explain how the redeemed multitude mentioned in the Apocalypse are said to have washed their robes and made them *white* in the *blood* of the Lamb. Their robes were their earthly bodies, which they no longer required when they had put on Christ, *i.e.*, when the Christ Spirit or highest Principle was developed in them, and they thus partook of the body and blood of Christ. Also we must not forget that "*the Lamb of God*" is described as having been slain before the foundation of the world.

Even Buddha and Cristna were originally considered the same, and had a thousand names in common constantly repeated in their Litanies: a striking proof of identity of origin. But the enemies of Christianity would fain endeavour to invalidate the sacred story of the Incarnation of the Christ Spirit, the ninth Avatar, by adducing this similarity, not perceiving, in their utter ignorance of the truth, that it is this very similarity which is the greatest proof of its authenticity, consequently of its truth, inasmuch that it corresponds in all particulars to the celestial story told from the beginning, and first recorded on the imperishable pages of the heavenly chart or "Starry Scriptures of the Sky." Thus all the leading characteristics of the Gospels, their incidental utterances and doctrines, were also ascribed to corresponding characters in India, Egypt, Greece, and other lands, and found even by the discoverers in far off and unknown Mexico, even to the effigy of the Divine Humanity crucified between those two thieves, who represent the material body and the animal soul, the latter saved at the eleventh hour, through the Christ, by clinging to the higher or Spiritual Soul, and thus being with it in Paradise. There is no doubt these effigies existed in Mexico anterior to the Christian era.

The Cross, besides other occult meanings, was used as a symbol to denote the attainment of life eternal through the crucifixion of the body, or lower nature. We find in the temples of Southern India the touching representation of the Saviour Wittoba or Ballajé, evidently an Avatar of Cristna, who is represented as crucified in space, and not fixed to a wooden cross, though the legs and feet are put together in the usual way, with nail holes in the latter, and in the hands; the glory shines downwards on the upraised face, and is flooded upon him, as if from the Celestial Sun, instead of emanating from himself as does the Aura with which the head of Christ is generally depicted. The Crown on the head of Wittoba is an Ethiopian or Parthian coronet; also consisting of sharp cutting points as sharp as thorns!

Thus the learned and celebrated divine, Parkhurst, instead of endeavouring to conceal these facts, as so many do, most wisely and honestly alludes to them, and observes as follows: "But the labours of Hercules seem to have had a still higher view, and to have been originally designed as emblematic memorials of what the real Son of God and Saviour of the world was to do and suffer for our sakes; *bringing a cure for all our ills*, as the Orphic hymn speaks of Hercules," and he gives the quotation. Now, had he been a Theosophist instead of a Theologist he would have had a still deeper insight into the mystery of the Christ, and understood more fully the true Nature of the Son of God, which we each have it in our power to become, if we follow in *the Way* of our Great Exemplar, who was "*the Way, the Truth, and the Life.*"

All that was written in the beginning upon the heavenly chart, is not only true of all the successive Avatars who have appeared on this earth at the commencement of every Neros, but is true also for all those in each generation or cycle of 600 years "*who have believed through My* (*their*) *word*, that they all may be one, as Thou, Father, art in Me and I in Thee, that they also may be one in us."—(John xvii. 20, 21.)

All those who attain to the Christ state can only do so as Christ Himself attained to the New Birth, viz., by being "*born again of water and of the Spirit* (*i.e.*, of Soul and Spirit), of which the account of His own baptism in the sacred stream was a type, or "outward and visible sign of that inward and spiritual grace." He then received the waters of Baptism, that symbol of the New Birth, from one who bore the significative name of JOHN, which name stands for *Love*, as it also stands for *Ione*, or the female generative principle, in this case the Spiritual or Feminine Soul, the Mother; while at the same time the Dove, typical of the Holy Spirit, "descended, and *remained* upon Him;" and then came the voice, or WORD, from heaven, "THIS IS MY BELOVED SON, in whom I am well pleased."

"And John bare record, saying: I saw the Spirit descending from heaven like a dove, and it ABODE upon Him. And I knew Him not: but He that sent me to baptize with water, the same said unto me, Upon whom thou shalt see the Spirit descending, and REMAINING ON HIM, the same is He which baptizeth with the Holy Spirit. And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."—(John i. 32—34.)

Jesus came to show us the *way*; He was the "Mediator of the New Covenant, of the church of the first-born," therefore our elder Brother, our own particular Avatar (that is to say of all those who accept Him, and believe through His word); and we have but to *follow Him*, to receive the baptism of water and the Spirit with which He was baptized, or, in other words, to develop in ourselves the Spiritual Soul (or Sixth Principle), which will Immaculately conceive by the Holy Spirit, and the Divine Seed will take root and germinate in that pure Virgin Soil, our own Spiritual Soul, no longer the earthly EVE, but the heavenly MARIA, and the Divine Child will be born in that *Stable*, or abode of Animality in which we at present are, and that Child will *grow* and increase in wisdom and in stature, and will sit in the temple (which temple we are), and will argue with the doctors (all the doctrines we have acquired in our education in the world, from its distorted teachings), and will "astonish them with its understanding and answers."—(Luke iii. 46 and 48.)

But all who, like Jesus, are born of the Christ Spirit, will also have to suffer with Him; this, however, they will be supported to do *if* they have really put on Christ, for they may be very sure of one thing, and that is, that if He is in them He will *bear a great deal*, aye, even to the last drop in the cup of agony, even to the crucifixion. But let them remember, that when

He was reviled He reviled not again, and like Him "thou shalt not strive or cry, but possess thy soul in the utmost patience."

Having made the great renunciation, even as Buddha made it, of your self-love and your earthly personality, you will say henceforth to the Father as Christ said, "Thy will is my will." You have exchanged your earthly personality for the spiritual *Indivi-duality*, and you will be able to say even as Christ said, "*The Father and I are One*," "*All things that the Father hath are mine*." It was the Christ in Jesus who said to the Father, "*I in them and Thou in me, that they may all be made perfect in one, as Thou Father art in me and I in Thee*."—(John xvii. 21 and 23.)

Here we find the TWO IN ONE-NESS taught clearly as can be, and this is how it is that those who are once awakened to the Higher Life, the Life of the Spiritual Soul, are never alone. Jesus said, "The hour cometh, yea now is, when ye shall be scattered every man to his own, and shall leave me alone: and yet I am not alone, because the Father is with me."—(John xvi. 32.)

The appearance of an exceptionably gifted Messenger or Teacher on the earth nearly twenty centuries ago in Galilee may be an actual and an indisputable historical fact, and to us it is so; but true though it is that Jesus of Nazareth, (or rather, Jesus the Nazarite,) lived and wrought among the Jews of Palestine at the commencement of His Cycle just closed, it is not true that He, as a person, subject to the limitations of humanity, was the perfect and entire Christ or LOGOS, whose universal radiations have illumined every land beneath the Sun, and made oasis to appear in the wilderness of even utmost barbarism, "that is the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world." And of that light we received through Jesus, whose mission it was to bring it to us.

This *inner* light signified to the Gnostics, at the head of whom stood the author of the Fourth Gospel, what the LOGOS or WORD meant to Plato, who mentions it long before the Cycle or Avatar of Christ Jesus. Speaking mystically, the WORD is the Divine Proceeding, or utterance, the Light of the Universal Spirit in every human being; it is, as we have seen, the *Atma*, or Divine Seventh and highest Principle in the Constitution of man, (see plate at page 154,) and as the innermost Essence of being, the embodied Divinity wherever the perfected man is found, it is truly described as a Principle, and not as a Person ; but though itself impersonal, or more than personal, it is made manifest through personality; and in the whole range of human experience we can conceive of no one who made that inner light more fully manifest than He who earned a full right to be called Christ, and Immanuel, because He laboured throughout His days to show forth to the world the Divine nature of man, and to reveal the Fatherhood of the Eternal.

The Logos is the Adonai which dwelt with the Eternal, and proceeded forth from God before the worlds were formed. Jesus the man must not be confounded with the LOGOS, which was made manifest through Him, He having attained to the Christhood, or Divine Humanity, *when He received the Logos into His own Spirit*, and thus became the Anointed, or Chrestos. The Logos is the ADONAI, the Two-in-One; for the word implies duality of sex. He is the immediate proceeding of Love and Wisdom, (the Divine Father-Mother God,) being the *Word* and *Voice* of Divine Truth, "by whom all things were made." Adonai is the manifestation of God in the Heavens, Christ is the manifestation of God in humanity; Adonai is celestial, Man is terrestrial, and the Christ is their point of junction, without whom they would not meet, for man only understands God when he receives the Christ-Spirit into himself, as Christ received the Logos into His own Spirit, and thus became a Son of God, as well as Son of Man. Man, as human only, could not say as the Christ says, "The Father and I are One," he must become a Son of God before he can feel this, and it is the indwelling Christ, or Word, which enables him to say it, for Christ is the perfected Spiritual *Man*, Son of God, and Son of Man.*

The Roman Catholic doctrine is that of the Nicene Creed, viz., of the eternal birth of the Son from the Father, and the eternal procession of the Holy Spirit from both; which doctrine the Greek Church as vigorously repudiated—both believed equally in the Trinity, but the one denied the procession of the Spirit from both Son and Father, which the other persistently maintained.

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* For the most complete and beautiful explanation of the true nature of ADONAI that has ever been penned we refer the reader to the concluding pages of that most perfect book "The Perfect Way; or, the Finding of Christ." It is too full to quote in its entirety, and to make extracts from it would simply be to spoil it.

Endless disputes would have been avoided had this Holy Trinity been explained from the first in a rational manner as being Father, Mother, and Son-Daughter, (or Two-in-One), for such it really is, the Son partaking of the Divine dual nature, (thus "in the image of God, male and female created He Him"). The Ancient Egyptians were more enlightened in this respect, and not having lost the Key, as Christian Theologists lost it when they separated from THEOSOPHY and dogma took the place of Gnosis, they were able to illustrate the Divine Mysteries on a more rational basis than Christian Theologists either of Roman or Greek Church have succeeded in doing, when they have presented us with a Male Trinity which would give the lie to everything that has proceeded from it in nature; for all that is, is of the two sexes, the positive and passive, and "*the man is not without the woman in the Lord.*" It is true they have endeavoured to repair the wilful male shortsightedness which led then into such an egregious error, by introducing on the earthly and visible plane the figure of the Blessed Virgin Mother; but as by their first Masculine Trinity of Parents and Son they failed to show forth her holy significance to the Divine MOTHER, they have but *left room* for blasphemous assertions concerning what would otherwise have been accepted as a self-evident, Divine, and saving truth.

In the Church the Eternal One, who is both Father and Mother of the Universe, when manifesting as Divine Love is called the Son, and when manifesting as Divine Wisdom is always referred to also by a *masculine* pronoun, as the Holy Ghost, or Spirit—though that of Universal Mother would surely be more applicable. While these Divine attributes in the act of emanation are of course beyond all limits of personality, it is through personality that the Divine Life is made manifest to men on earth and to spirits in the unseen spheres; though in purely *celestial* realms of being, both in the universe and in man (who is a universe in himself), intuitive apprehension of truth does away with the necessity for reliance being placed upon individual messengers or ministrants.

The reputed books of Solomon, such as Wisdom and Ecclesiasticus, are full of allusions to the doctrines of Wisdom, and they invariably use the word Wisdom with the feminine pronoun as referring to an unexplained or mystical doctrine in almost every page. This doctrine was that of the Emanation of the Sephiroth, which the *present* Jews call the *Ten Emanations.*

"Sephiroth is ספרות *Spruts*, and may mean ten attributes or qualities, but it also means the doctrine of the Ten Sacred Numbers or Cycles of India, or of Virgil; *Spr* is to cypher or count, or calculate; and *Spruts* is the feminine plural, and means the calculations or calculated periods. Thus the Ten Jewish Sephiroth were the Ten Cycles; and in honour of the Trinity the first was called כתר Ktr Corona, the second חכמה Chkme Sapientia, and the third בינה Bine Intelligentia—Father, Son, and Holy Ghost. The first *three* were also the Trinitarian Sol — the

Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer—and the other seven might be the earth, moon, and planets. The Corona or Circulus is also called Ensoph, *fountain* of Wisdom, fountain whence Wisdom flowed. . . The third of the Sephiroth is Prudentia. This is the Anima Mundi, or Psyche of Plato. I believe that בינה *bine* is a feminine form of בן *bn*, son, and means daughter of Ensoph and Sophia, Wisdom or Logos. The Targums often treat of a מימראדיי *Mimra*, or *daughter of Voice*, that is, daughter of the Logos: this, I think was the בינה *Bine*, not the Logos.

"The Psalmist says, lxxi. 15, He shall praise the justice of God, and depend upon it for his salvation, for he has not known the ספרות *Sprut*, or Sephiroth; that is, the calculation of the Cycles. The text is rather confused; but this, though not a translation, I think, is its meaning. But the Sephiroth are correctly rendered *numbers*. They are the same as the feminine forms of the Seraphim, alluded to in Isaiah, vi. 2. The six wings of each seraph had reference to the six periods just gone, in the time of Solomon. In verse nine, the Tenth of something mystical not *understood* and not *named*, but which, it is said, in verse 13, has been before, and shall return, means the *Tenth* Sæculum or Cycle. . . I need not remind my readers that the serpent is an emblem of a cycle or circle. Serpents are constantly seen on Egyptian monuments, as described by Isaiah, but with wings, and, in India, overshadowing the icons of Cristna or Buddha, in number three, four, five, six, seven, eight, or nine, according to the number of cycles of which the being he was protecting was the genius. One of these winged serpents may be seen in the hand of the Moses, found in St. Mary's Abbey, at York. The wings are manifest in the original icon, but in the plate published by the Society of Antiquaries they cannot be distinguished ! ! ! Moses is there described as the Messiah משה *msh* or genius of a Zodiacal sign, and that of the first sign, as is evident from the *horns of Taurus which he has upon his head.* When he has finished all his labours, *the book* tells us, he delivered up his power to the Saviour Joshua, and went to the top of Pisgah to die."—("Anacalypsis" i. 784.)

The serpent which ever accompanies all representations of the Avatar, Messiah, or Saviour of each Cycle, and which we first meet with in company of the first pair, who represent the parents of the human race, and who is more particularly attached to our earth mother, EVE, in the earthly Paradise or garden of delights (the human body), we believe very clearly to signify *earthly* or *material* GENERATION, the necessity for which ever ends with Spiritual RE-generation, or "birth from above," that second birth of, or from, our Heavenly Mother MARY, that Holy Virgin, and ever Immaculate Spiritual Soul, "*our own Sixth Principle*," of whom is born the Christ Spirit, or "*Son of God*." Thus is she the Mother of God in Man. And therefore is she ever represented as well as the Avatar, or "*Saviour*" of each succeeding cycle of the race from the prison-house of flesh, as crushing the head of the serpent, who with his tail in his mouth, or material union, represents the *Circle* of earthly generations of the Cycle of his Predecessor.

Among the Ophites, and indeed the Gnostics generally, the serpent was called the Megalistor or Great Builder of the Universe. With the tail in the mouth serpents were the material emblems of the Eternal Creator, or Renovator. He was the Megalistor because he was the emblem of the Logos, the Creator or Renewer of Circles, or worlds in Cyclic periods. The serpent is known to renew itself eternally by casting its old skin when decayed, and growing a new one; and this annual renewal made it emblematical of the Sun, or year, which, added to its most deadly power as destroyer, assimilated it on the material plane with the Logos, the Wisdom of the Self-existent, the Cycle, Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, on the heavenly or spiritual plane.

We often hear of the wisdom of the serpent, and that it was called "*more subtle than any beast of the field.*" (Genesis iii. 1.) We also hear of the egg of the serpent, and of the egg of wisdom (*i.e.*, from which the world sprung?) opened by the horn of the bull (evidently the first Cycle of Taurus).

Certainly the world came from Wisdom; the Divine Mother—the "ברשית,"—or *Bereschith*, the *feminine Head;* translated into English as in the "beginning"—("In the beginning God created.") The more correct reading of which would be in the female. But the Creator of all things was also the Destroyer; and the Megalistor, the great Builder of the Universe, the Magus, or Naga, or great Serpent; and being also the emblem of the Destroyer, and the Destroyer being Divine Wisdom, it became the emblem of Divine Wisdom on the lower plane, and thus it is ever seen in all the representations of her *representative*, the Holy Virgin, who, however, rises above it, and crushes it beneath her feet.

As the secret doctrine of the Creator, Preserver, and Destroyer, or Creator, Destroyer, and Renovator, became known in the middle and western parts of Asia, it began to be corrupted, and the absurd idea of a fallen angel to creep in, at first among the ignorant vulgar only, but at last among the higher class of the ignorant learned, who ought to have been ashamed of harbouring such ideas of the good and all-wise providence of the Omnipotent and Omniscient Creator, the Divine Father and Mother. In Genesis there are no fallen angels. All these came into the Mosaic religion on the return from Babylon. The Destroyer or Serpent of Genesis is most certainly the Renovator or *Preserver* of the human race through earthly or material generation. In Genesis there is a Tree of Knowledge and a Tree of Life. This Tree of Life evidently proves the meaning of the Mythos to be, that Adam would die at some time; that he would wear out unless he ate of the fruit of that tree. The Serpent (emblem of Earthly Wisdom) persuaded Eve to taste of the Tree of Knowledge, and thus to renew the earthly form, etc., etc.

The Buddhist natives of Tibet hold the grand Lama to be always the same person, the same Buddha, only re-incarnated or renovated, in a new mundane case or body; and Jesus Christ was considered by some Christians to be a renewed incarnation of both Adam and Noah; and this was *one* of the reasons for the careful setting forth of His pedigree in the New Testament. Thus he was, in fact, Adam; but Adam sinned, and for his sin he was, in the person of Jesus Christ, Crucified. Thus did they materialise the spiritual fact that the son of Adam, or man, must be crucified in the flesh, that the Son of God may be lifted up and (spiritually) draw all men (the whole of humanity) up to Him.

The Christ sphere or circle, in the Heavens, is the sphere of Truth, the offspring of Love and Wisdom, the Dual Life, because fully blended in celestial being; and from that sphere the Divine Love and Wisdom is constantly impelling pure and holy souls to embody themselves for man's redemption. Angels, who think nothing of their own glory, are continually impelled to go forth to benefit the multitudes on earth who need such instruction and assistance as can only reach them when heaven comes down to earth in order to draw earth up to Heaven; the Christ Sphere being composed of myriads of souls whose special work is to protect and guide the earth. The impediments of those who are mediators between the lower states on earth and the celestial spheres are many; but once in a period or cycle a Leader of the Angel Hosts, a Ruler of the Christ Circle of Angels, is born on earth for an especial mission, and the birth of such an one is in reality the manifestation of God, or a Son of God, to the world, in no ordinary degree.

Jesus of Nazareth was a soul in its last earthly embodiment whose life was a model, a pattern life, of matchless purity and devotion to duty. Had He been more than *perfect* man He would have been too exalted to be an example to humanity. We utterly fail to see how or why, with any show of consistency, those who believe in the successive embodiments of the human spirit until it reaches perfection, (according to the injunction, "Be perfect, as your heavenly Father is perfect,") can dispute the fact of an occasional case in point occurring as an illustration of the fact that the human spirit in its final embodiment on earth manifests the perfect character, to ensure which, all preceding embodiments have been a necessity.

"The life of Jesus was a progressive life; He grew in mental and moral stature; and it is not, to our way of thinking, consistent with a scheme of wisdom befitting the Eternal Mind for any soul to be born on earth as an Avatar or Messiah, to undergo pain and penalty vicariously without needing himself the very discipline he passes through to fit him for celestial life. The angel of the earth does not need embodiment, and therefore does not become incarnate; but through a chosen and prepared instrumentality the angel makes known his presence to the world in special measure. A life like that of Jesus—a life of humility, exceeding purity, forgivingness of disposition, and perpetual self-abnegation—is the very life best calculated to express the Divine attributes of the soul, and to constitute a fitting medium for an angel, or angels, from the celestial spheres."

To the above, the author might have added in proof, that Jesus was required to suffer a series of temptations in the flesh, which surely would have been unnecessary had He not personally required the discipline of a final incarnation to insure His perfection.

From the same lecture, delivered by Mr. J. W. Colville, in Boston, on a very remarkable book, entitled "The Spirit of the New Testament," we take the liberty of extracting the following reflections concerning the birth of Christ, which we accompany by a footnote from the author of the book, who is a lady:

"The first point which is prominently brought into notice in connection with the life of Jesus is His mysterious parentage and birth. Stories of immaculate and miraculous conceptions are not uncommon in the annals of sacred history. Christians have usually looked with disfavour and contempt upon all records except the Hebrew and their own; but to-day comparative theology is a popular study, and the old terms, heathen and pagan, are no longer used ignorantly and imperatively as of yore. Who, having read Edwin Arnold's *Light of Asia*, can call Buddha a heathen? He lived before the days of Jesus, but so did Abraham and all the patriarchs. Every virtue possessed by them shone resplendently in the lives of the highest type of Hindoo, of which *Gautama Sakya Muni*, the latest of the Buddhas, was the fairest flower. This marvellous teacher, who lived about 550 B.C., is said to have been conceived and born miraculously, as was Jesus at a later date. A star-beam was said to have caused the conception: therefore he had no man, but a ray of celestial light, for his father. Even Plato is said by some of his admirers to have been born of a virgin. Thus the Christian dogma of the supernatural nature of Jesus is in no way fortified by the legend of His mysterious origin on earth; as we must either conclude that all such stories as these told of His parentage are fables, or else we must conclude that He is only one out of several, and possibly many, highly-inspired and wondrously-developed teachers, who have from time to time blessed the earth with revelations from the spheres supernal. Either of these views must of necessity destroy the uniqueness of the career of this celebrated man, and place him at least on a level with a few others. It now behoves us to carefully analyze the doctrine and see how far the idea of a miraculous birth or conception is likely to be of benefit to those endorsing such a theory. . . . . But if so-called miracles have frequently occurred in the past, and are still occurring, or liable to occur, and these reputed miracles come within the range of man's observation; if their occurrence has an effect on human life, and especially if they are worked in the interests of mankind, they must surely occur through the operation of laws which concern and govern some part, at least, of the nature of man. . . . No subject is too sacred, none too delicate, for calm and careful investigation. Coarse minds will brutalize all they touch, but to the pure all things are pure; and while the '*pure in heart* see God,' the impure always find the devil. Now is it not in consonance with reason and enlightened intuition to suppose that every law of nature is pure in and of itself; and is it not blasphemy to assume that God is the author of every law of being, of all bodily as well as mental and moral functions, and then to set to work to build up a dogma of total depravity, and invent an unnatural hypothesis to account for a Divine result?

"Whoever the parents of Jesus may have been, and whoever Jesus may have been Himself, even if He were 'God the Son, the Second Person of the ever-blessed and eternal Trinity,' assuming flesh for man's redemption, as orthodox Christians teach, may not

His conception have been immaculate, and yet in all things *natural?* The Roman Church teaches the 'immaculate conception of the blessed Virgin Mary,' and thereby brings before us a truth which Protestantism has not admitted, and that is, the possibility of a child having both parents, and yet coming stainless into the world. Joachim, her father, and Anna, her mother, are said to have been 'saints,' holy people; and though the Church of Rome has added the statement that the immaculate conception of their daughter was accomplished through a special operation of the Holy Spirit, why should it not be credited that the time has been, and will be again, when under exceptional circumstances a child could be born without hereditary taint, and free from the contaminating influences occasioned by thoughts, words, and deeds of impurity? . . . The true interpretation of the word virgin, as employed in Isaiah in the celebrated passage, '*Behold a virgin shall conceive and bear a son, and call his name Emanu-El*' (God with us), is not an open question. The Hebrew word translated virgin simply means a person distinguished for purity, not by any means necessarily an unmarried woman. What says the Christian Testament on this point? Paul says Marriage may be honourable in all, and when honourable is no source of impurity. In the *Apocalypse* we are told of a company of men who were 'virgins' because their lives were pure. Virgin does not necessarily mean a woman at all, only a pure-minded, pure-living person (Soul); thus we can deduce the following eminently practical, helpful, and instructive lesson: that through perfect purity of thought and will, parents may attract to themselves a spirit from the celestial spheres, who may be born to them as a son or a daughter in the ordinary course of nature, and yet so developed morally and spiritually that their child shall be indeed a fulfilment of prophecy, and a saviour of men in the highest sense in which we can legitimately use that expression."*

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* The author of the work so generously referred to by the lecturer has read his MS. with deep interest. She would say that the idea to which this footnote is appended is precisely that which she desires to place before the people. Leaving the question of the birth of Christ aside for the present, as well as that of the mystic legends with regard to other seers of great, but lesser note, she believes that in the perfected union of man and woman reside

The Jesus of the Gospels is a humble, self-denying man, who eschewed all the pomps and vanities of the world. This grand though lowly figure has been overlooked by those high and mighty ones who hold the Christian Church in His name, and who love the uppermost seats at the Festivals, and to disport themselves in purple and fine linen. The materialisation of the kingdom of Christ must ever rob that kingdom of the spiritual characteristics which alone make of it a heavenly kingdom. The Gospel-Jesus has been almost set aside and a Christ manufactured out of the ancient mythos which has well nigh hidden from view the charming figure which occupies the place of honour in the Gospels. Do not our hearts burn within us as we read His wise and holy teachings? If they were followed, instead of their genuineness being disputed, the religion of Jesus, unchanged and unadorned, would be like the lilies of the field—outrivalling even the wisdom of Solomon.

The Jesus of the Gospels is a personal manifestation or embodiment on earth of the true Christ, the "Adonai," in the heavens; the Christ Sphere being composed of angels whose number is not to be

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all the possibilities of the long-revered "immaculate conception." Unquestionably, woman, rather than man, must realise these profound truths, which are simply part of spiritual science, for in her nature and consciousness, alone are given the possibilities and proofs of motherhood. These higher laws, difficult as they are to unfold in the present elementary condition of life—morality, science, and knowledge of the nature and forces of the Soul—are of immense power, and capable of revolutionising the world through radical, vital, and organic changes.

counted on earth. One of the great Souls who are at the centre of the Celestial STAR, which rules and shines on this otherwise forlorn and benighted planet, assumed a human form when the Babe of Bethlehem was born, and the star that led the Magi of the East to the cradle of the lowly Infant was both the Light of the Spirit and a knowledge of the position of the Sun, Moon, and planets, at the close of the cycle and the beginning of another. For the astrologers of old were deeply learned in all interplanetary relations, and understood the laws of their periodicity as well as the all-powerful magnetic sway they exercise in a system which is of common origin; and the ancient Sages, or Magi, were deeply versed in, or inspired with, a knowledge of the spiritual influences ever guiding the ebb and flow of the Spiritual development of humanity on earth, which occurs by influx from Angelic Spheres at stated periods called Cycles, and coincides with these planetary manifestations, as day and night, or light and darkness, the ebb and flow of tides, and many other physical phenomena which are governed by the same organic laws.

Christ is not a proper name, but a title, indicative of a state, and therefore cannot be applied exclusively to one single historical personage, no matter how highly exalted that person may be by reason of spiritual attainment; but the Christ-name may be fitly borne by those who while on earth live in perfect union with celestial spheres, and are, in a peculiar sense, the messengers of the heavenly guardians, who, though always keeping watch over humanity, at frequently recurring intervals depute one of their number to inspire an earthly teacher with a fuller measure of Celestial Wisdom. The term Christ simply means anointed, (in the Latin it is *Christos*, and is frequently employed to designate those who have been in a peculiar measure the recipients of Divine truth) this leads us to inquire into the reason why unction should be a symbol of the Divine inbreathing, and why the Chrism should for thousands of years, in many lands and among many peoples, have been employed in rites of consecration.

Oil as a type or correspondence of Divine wisdom was chosen by the ancients because of its lubricating properties; thus we read in the Psalms of oil making the faces of the anointed to shine, thereby at once by a purely natural sequence of ideas leading us up to the thought of mental and inward illumination. Oil is also employed for making things work smoothly, for removing harshness and unyielding rigidity; it, moreover, has great soothing and healing properties, and at once suggests to the mind the idea of relief from pain and suffering. We could also cull many parallel statements from the sacred books of the entire Orient, and from many curious and occult treatises, to demonstrate the universality of the use of oil in ordinations, &c.; but we must leave it to the reader to fill in such blanks by his own researches, our object in introducing the subject at all being to call attention to the choice of correspondential terminology. Many persons imagine that the symbolism of the East, no matter how glowing and vivid, is mere gorgeous fancy, while it is in reality a perfect language, understood, written, and spoken by men in past ages, who had studied the Esoteric side of nature so deeply that they had learned how to trace the unvarying similitudes which in the material world correspond exactly to the realities of the interior or spiritual realm, which is the world of causation. Thus we have already seen how constantly another term besides oil is referred to when Christ is spoken of, and that is "*blood.*"—Blood being the life, it is evidently the Christ-*life* which saves, and thus to live the Christ-life is to drink, or appropriate, the blood of Christ, and not the literal shedding of blood. Added to these we have the eternal symbols of Bread and of Wine, once represented by the worship of Bacchus and of Ceres—the Bread of Life which can miraculously feed thousands, and much remain over; the water which is truly turned into wine at the marriage feast when Soul and spirit are united, &c., &c., too numerous to set forth in this already overcrowded chapter, but which can all be studied in the writings of the inspired Swedenborg, part of whose mission was to explain the law and doctrine of Spiritual Correspondences.

Since quoting from a lecture, delivered in Boston, concerning "THE SPIRIT OF THE NEW TESTAMENT," "by a Woman," on page 388, we have come into a more direct knowledge of the book itself, through the courtesy of its author, and have been at once struck with the following passage on its very opening pages:—

"... Look deep enough, and that which seems a myth, or world-wide legend, a Scripture of the skies, is 'a voice crying in the wilderness,' which is the herald of some eternal truth, born in a moment of inspiration, and winged with life to live in many forms in the minds of millions. A great event is, indeed, vaguely shadowed forth in many phases of religion, and for centuries before it occurs.

"Every lesson that could teach man how to conquer self, and to conquer matter, was to be taught. The kingdom, so eagerly looked for by Jewish priests and rabbis, and which had been the hope of Israel for more than fifteen hundred years, was to be that of the interior life—the royalty of the Spirit, strong in the strength of love, and the divine law of its incarnation—and it was to crush and cast out all selfish expectations of that time or any other. And this was the design:

"Woman was to be an instrument in the work.

"She was to become a Mother in pure liberty, which acknowledged neither human laws nor rites of priests.

"The very birth of the Man was to be a hushed-up reproach.

"His cradle would be a manger.

"A carpenter's workshop would be the scene of his childhood.

"His home would be among a despised people, and in an uncultured province.

"Seclusion was to be his lot until manhood.

"The Knowledge of his mission would be awakened by a reformer outside of the Jewish Church.

"That reformer would be a martyr, who would taste of prison and of death.

"Evil influences would assail him, though they should not prevail.

"Dishonour and insults were to attend the success of his three years' mission.

"He was to associate with publicans and sinners, and women of no repute.

"To outrage orthodox and reverenced beliefs.

"To be charged with selfishly seeking an earthly crown, while absolutely disappointing the self-same persons in his work for a kingdom not of this world.

"To be homeless, doubted by his own family, and to know not where to lay his head.

"To be called 'mad,' a 'deceiver,' a 'Sabbath breaker,' a 'blasphemer,' and one in league with evil spirits.

"To be betrayed as disreputable by an apparent follower.

"To be forsaken of every friend, and falsely accused.

"To be disgraced and convicted as a common criminal, and to be crucified outside the walls of Jerusalem between two poor thieves.

"And to achieve the result of the Sacrifice in the eternal victory of the Soul.

"After this it is almost unnecessary to point out that the details of the life of the Nazarene, as an ideal man, contains a symbolical history of the destiny of the human race.

"The Virgin woman represents the soul of man.

"The visit of the Spirit—the growth of seership which awakens her consciousness.

"The immaculate conception—the infusion of the spiritual into the external, vitalising it with new life.

"The birth of the Christ—the spiritualisation of man, or the 'seed of the woman,' who conquers the 'dragon,' or physical matter, and its evils.

"The voice of the Baptist—the recognition of the coming development of man, through prophecy, and minds free from creeds.

"The wilderness—the lonely warfare of the spiritual before it can enter on its divine mission.

"The works of love and mercy—the living and awakening power of soul.

"The trial—the arraignment of the illuminated soul by the reason.

"The crucifixion—its temporary rejection, and final struggle with the blindness of the material nature.

"The manifestation or at-one-ment—the union of the twain, the harmony of the inner and the outer, the open proof of immortality and of the way of life.

"The ascension—the passing beyond the spheres of planetary life and the eternal reign of the soul.

> "All nature tells this beautiful story. The very husk of the seed dissolves as it bursts from the dark soil with its new germ of life. The very winter heralds its victory. The death of the body sets free the spirit. And at last the penetration of the physical by the spiritual produces the final liberation of man."

When Theologians come to realize that the Christ Circle is a body of faithful Souls who have persisted through earthly strife in wisdom and in love, and that a special representative and medium upon earth of this angelic sphere is only One through whom the Universal Light shines with excessive clearness and effulgence, the mysteries of Christianity will yield to a simple Gospel truth, which is, that the true light is the Divine flame within the human breast, and that what the greatest have been actually is true, mystically and prophetically, of us all. The historic Jesus is the external symbol of humanity, earth-born and heaven-begotten, thus is He the prophecy of Universal Manhood, and Divine Sonship.

Therefore, and in the light of that Universal Theosophy which we aspire to, and so earnestly endeavour to set forth, do we feel constrained to say, in the eloquent words of a contemporary writer, * "*We take our refuge in Jesus the Christ.*" "In every age of the world God has raised up extraordinary men, and imparted to them a high degree of light from the living Word. Such were Moses, Zoroaster, Confucius, Plato, and above all, Gautama, the Buddha.

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* "Healing by Faith; or, Primitive Mind Cure." By W. F. Evans.

There was many a stray beam of the Living Light of the Logos in all their systems; but it does not come in a form to be easily and practically appropriated by the souls of men in general. And if Jesus should say to me, as He did to the twelve select disciples, when many of His shallow followers were leaving Him, 'Will you also go away?' I should be constrained to say, as all the world's great teachers passed in procession before the mind, 'Lord, to whom shall I go? Thou hast the words of Eternal Life.'"

The long continuance of Christianity, even as an Exoteric system, has consolidated various nations, and made the Christian as distinct a type as the Semit or the Heathen. The Christian is a positive anti-polytheist, despite the misinterpreted doctrine of the Trinity, and, like the Semit, Divine Worship, to the exclusion of the worship of spirits, is the Esoteric base of his religious ideas.

The Hindu, for instance, to be a Monotheist must be an Initiate; but in the West even one God is too many for some minds.

The ages of Christianity have impressed an abhorrence of polytheism which the Hindus could but with difficulty understand.

Christianity, as one of the factors that resolved itself into a religious system in the mental ferment that agitated the civilized world nearly two millenniums ago, being inaugurated by Hebrew Theosophists, could not help retaining certain Kabbalistic truisms and terms, which subsequently became the stumbling-block of the uninitiated.

The Theosophic doctrine of the Logos was not extinguished with the destruction of Paganism, but revived and acquired new meaning in Christianity, and became the leading and fundamental truth of that system.

Every new system is made up of preceding systems, which may be more abstruse or more simple, but it always aims at an improvement.

Pagan Theosophy may have been more recondite, but the Christian Theosophy was more plain and simple, and easy of comprehension for all minds. To be a Pagan Theosophist one had to pass through Esoteric classes and grades; but anyone could freely become a good Christian, and thereby a brother in Christ.

The large majority of Pagan Initiates may have looked down with contempt upon the Galileans and their Theosophy, but the few divinely-inspired ones, who gave their life for the Truth, carried all before them by their whole-souled devotedness to their God, and their knowledge of the Christ.

It was in vain that Initiates attempted to revive Paganism by revealing the mysteries of their Theosophy; the spirit of the age had become tired of ancient institutions and names, and sighed for new Truths which were more direct rays from the Spiritual Sun than the reflections of Paganism afforded; and this was the secret of the success of Christianity.

Gnosticism alone partly survived by becoming united with the Christian system. In the writings of Dionysius, the Areopagite, the term "Agnosis" is often employed, and seems to have been in current use eighteen centuries before Professor Huxley re-invented it for the use of modern men of *science.*

When we read the affirmations of Dionysius, an inspired Theosophist, a man who *knew*, asserting all his knowledge to be ignorance of such vastness as to be undefinable to finite understanding, it appears strange that men should ever have attempted to dogmatize upon the Deity, and should have dared to promise eternal damnation to those who differed from them.

Unlike the Buddhist's absolute non-definition of the Divine Being, content to refer only to the *State* of Being which is Divine, without attempting to account for the existence of the Divine Being itself;—unlike the Gnostic's abstruse system, where the entire Heathen Pantheon in its mystic spiritual character reappears to serve as Esoteric guide unto perfection, and to account for the problems of existence in more or less satisfactory manner; unlike the Semit's religion of fear, the Heathen's systematized sensualism,—the true Christian alone observes the Perfect Way of perfection, avoiding alike false ignorance and false knowledge, false fear and degrading enjoyments, by an adherence to the grand simplicity of the Theosophy of Christ Jesus.

The Theosophy of Christ alone offers that rest to the weary heart by isolation in spirit, for which Buddhism and other Theosophies demand a total renunciation of all wordly relation. Christianity became thus, even in its most Exoteric form, the great civilizer of humanity; and what the West has gained in advance of the East is all due to a higher moral development.

The evils that exist among us are the result of non-Christianity and non-civilization, but not of Christianity, and of civilization. It is *not* Christianity, but the not carrying out the essential teachings of Christianity, that is to blame.

The reason Pythagoreanism, Platonism, and Gnosticism failed to become popular was, they had no sympathy for the heart, but appealed only to the intellect. All have emotions of some kind, but only few have a spiritual intellect. Everyone can feel with Christ and John, but very few can think with Plato and Plotinos. Not that Christians cannot have great intellects, but Christianity itself being based on the Christ Spirit, the true Light of the Soul, which is above reason, appeals but little to the merely sensual mind.

Christianity, even in its Esoteric aspect, soon separated from Gnosticism, and elected to follow its own path. The heart, not the brain; intuition, not ratiocination; infinite soul, not finite mind, became the sanctuary of Christian Theosophy. Toleration could have been reasonably expected from those who themselves, for all their Orthodoxy, could only define God as undefinable. But the very reverse appears in History. A Theology full of the most intolerant dogmas was built upon this very Agnosticism. Gnosis, or knowledge of God, became a heresy, and God, the God of Bruno, Galileo, and other so-called heretics, was outlawed and excommunicated more than once by His own Church.

It is not our intention to explain the various contradictions which are to be met with between Exoteric and Esoteric Christianity. These must explain themselves, or remain unexplained. All we can do is to state what has been.

No doubt most of the dogmas of the Church have an Esoteric meaning, but the mere Exoteric acceptance of all the dogmas of the Church cannot lead one to the Divine Sanctuary, for then all nominal Christians would be true Theosophists, which is far from being the case. It is the very inconsistency that proves the consistency, and the errors of man establish the truth of God. That there was a Divine Science is absolutely manifested, but it could only perpetuate itself among men and women, many of whom were fallible, weak creatures, and who consequently appeared to impart to the very Divinity a reflection of their own weaknesses. The Church evidently had a true tradition, derived directly from Christ, and the imperfect expression given to it by man proves only the greater reality and glory of God. Theosophy is perfect, although Theosophists may be imperfect; just as any science may be true, although its teachers may not have completely mastered it, and consequently may resort to curious devices to hide their ignorance.

The earliest Christian Theosophists, the Apostles, by identifying the Divine Incarnation with Christ Jesus, evidently intended that the Great Arcanum which, as

The Logos, had been the Secret of the few, should become the common Supreme Good; and if the uninitiated majority had not gradually lost the true doctrine, the Theosophy of Christ, and substituted, under the guidance of blind leaders, fanciful interpretations of Occult Texts; and had not the nominal Christians preferred to build their Church upon the sands of creed instead of The Rock Christ the true Gnosis, we should now have in Christianity a system of absolute Theosophy instead of an attempt to blend Divine Truth and human error.

The Reformation, unlike the more ancient Heresies, hardly entered upon theosophic ground, but contented itself in contesting theological matters of little or no importance to man's eternal welfare. It was but one Exoterism combating another Exoterism; but that Theosophy was never the field of contention is proved by its having rejected some of the most important dogmas of the original Church, failing to see their Esoteric truth. The fact that the Reformers, or Deformers, as Catholics persistently call them, were either bigots with little or no theosophic and spiritual knowledge, or tools in the hands of worldly persons, who used the religious movement for selfish aggrandizement, gave great moral power to Catholic religious orders who had some theosophic ideas, either acquired traditionally or discovered by individual mystics.

It was thus that the Jesuits acquired that otherwise unaccountable Power over the minds of men, which they have preserved through various vicissitudes down to the present day, when their order still counts nearly twelve thousand members. The Theosophy of the Jesuits is not all pretension, but it was the secret mainspring that gave them power. The works of Ignatius Loyola, Francis Xavier, Alphonsus Rodriguez, Athanasius Kircher, Jeremy Drexelius, and, more recently, of Louis du Pont, Scaramelli, and others, show undeniable spritual knowledge. Theosophy is there to be found; it may be deemed imperfect, but still it is an Esoteric system wherein the reformed section of Exoteric Christendom was and is deficient.

It must be admitted, however, that there are undeniable Adepts in Theosophy in the Reformed Church, such as Sebastian Frank, Freher, Gichtel, Pordage, Jane Leade, and above all, Jacob Boehme and Swedenborg. These were self-taught and spontaneously developed, and cannot be regarded as the offsprings of the Reformation; and the Reformed Church does not regard their Esoterism as part of its teachings, but neglects, and even deplores, mysticism. In Catholicism the members of Religious Orders are considered professional Theosophists, God-knowers, persons who devote themselves to a spiritual life. All mankind could not act in accordance with their vows; and we have already pointed out that isolation is mental, and not local: one can be a God-knower and nevertheless live in the world. The Theosophic ideal is still in the Catholic Church, yet it is not realised; but among the Reformed sects, although each of them asserts to have the truth, and possibly may have been instituted by Theosophists, the too fond adherence to the letter of Scripture "that kills" and to creeds, has generated a spirit of intolerance and bigotry totally opposed to that true spirit of Christian Theosophy which we will endeavour faintly to illustrate by the following few quotations from Esoteric texts selected almost at random:

"In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God. The same was in the beginning with God. All things were made through him; and without him was not made anything that was made. In him was life; and the life was the light of men, and the light shineth in the darkness, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. . . . . He was in the world, and the world was made through him; yet the world knew him not. He came unto his own, yet his own received him not: but as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, to them who believe on his name; who have been born not of blood, nor of the will of flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God. And the Word was made flesh, and dwelt among us, full of grace and truth: and we beheld his glory, the glory as of an only begotten from the Father. . . . And out of his fulness we all have received, even grace for grace. For the Law was given through Moses, but grace and truth came through Jesus Christ. No man hath seen God at any time: the only begotten Son who is in the bosom of the Father, he hath declared him."—(John i., Quaker Version of the N. T.)

"Darkness is dissipated by Light, and above all by a vast Light; Agnosis is dissipated by Gnosis, and above all by a vast Gnosis.

"To take it in a superior non-negative sense, affirm, with absolute truth, that to those who possess the real Light and the knowledge of beings, Agnosis escapes by a union with God; and that his super-eminent obscurity withdraws itself from all light, and vanishes under every Gnosis.

"Now, if in seeing God, one comprehends what one sees, God was not seen, but something of him, a knowable being.

"For he, super-established above intelligence and above sub stance, it is because he is absolutely not known and is not—that he is super-substantially, and is known super-intellectually.

"And this Agnosis, as perfect as possible, is the Gnosis of him who is above all knowable things."—(Dionysius the Areopagite; 1st Epistle to Cajus.)

"Divine obscurity is the inaccessible Light wherein God abideth. Now, although it be invisible by reason of its super-eminent clearness, and inaccessible through the superabundant effusion of its super-substantial light—nevertheless in it is found whoever merits to know and to see God, by the very fact not of seeing, not of knowing, yet finding one's self in him who is above sight and knowledge, knowing only one thing, that he is above all things apprehensible by the senses and the intellect, and crying with the prophet: Too wonderful is thy knowledge for me; it surpasses my mind, I am powerless before it.

"Thus the Divine Paul is reputed a knower of God, for knowing that he is above all intellection and existing Gnosis.

"Consequently he proclaims that even 'his ways are past tracing out;' 'his judgments unsearchable;' 'his gifts unspeakable;' and 'his peace passeth all understanding.'

"For he has found him who is above all, and he knows super-intellectually that the being, creator of all, is above all."—(*Idem;* Epistle to Dorothea.)

"To enjoy Infinity, do not desire to taste of finite things. To arrive at a knowledge of Infinity, do not desire the knowledge of finite things.

"To reach to the possession of Infinity, desire to possess nothing. To be included in the Being of Infinity, desire to be thyself nothing whatever.

"To arrive at that which thou dost not enjoy in the present, thou must journey by a way which thou enjoyest not.

"To reach forward to that which thou dost not know in the present, thou must pass by a way which thou knowest not.

"To obtain that which thou dost not possess in the present, thou must seek through means which thou possessest not.

"To arrive at being that which at present thou art not, it is of necessity for thee to tread the road through things which thou art not.

"The moment thou art resting in a creature, thou art ceasing to advance towards Infinity.

"Because in order to unite thyself perfectly to Infinity, thou must surrender finite things without reserve.

"And when thou shalt arrive at the attainment of Infinity, thou must rest in it without any self-will whatever.

"Because if thou art desiring any finite thing whatever, thy treasure is not laid up wholly in God."—(St. John of the Cross.)

Master Eckhard relates: "I ardently desired for eight years that God in his mercy would send a man to point out the way of truth to me. And as I was one day full of anxious desire there came a voice from God, saying: 'Go to the porch of the church and thou shalt find a man who can show thee the way of truth.'

"And I went and found a man there who was dusty and footsore, and clothed in rags. I saluted him, and said: 'God give thee a good day.' Whereat the beggar replied: 'I verily never have a bad day.' Whereupon I said, 'May God give thee good fortune.' He answered: 'I never have bad fortune.' Then I said: 'Mayest thou be happy.' To which the beggar replied: 'I never am unhappy.' Thereupon I concluded, 'May God bless thee, instruct me in this, for I do not understand.' He replied: 'Willingly.

"'Thou sayest, May God give me a good day. To that I replied: I verily never have a bad day; for when I hunger, I praise God, when I am cold, when it hails, snows, or rains, be the weather fair or foul—I praise God. Am I wretched and despised, I praise God: therefore I never have a bad day.

"'Thou sayest, May God give me good fortune, and I tell thee I never have bad fortune; for I know to live with God, and know that whatsoever he does, is for the best, and what God gives unto me or has destined for me, be it weal or woe, bitter or sweet, I accept it joyfully from God as the very best thing: and therefore I never have bad fortune.

"'Thou sayest also, May God make me happy, and I tell thee I am never unhappy; for I desire only to be united with God's will, and I have thus wholly renounced my own will for God's will, that whatever God wills, I will: and therefore I am never unhappy, for I desire only to be at one with God's will, and I have utterly surrendered my will to his will.'

"Whereupon I demanded of the man: 'But should God cast thee into Hell, what wouldest thou say then?'

"He replied: 'Cast me into Hell? If he were to cast me into Hell, I have two arms to clasp him. One arm is true humility, that I place beneath him, and therewith I am united with his holy humanity; and with the right arm of love thereby am I united with his holy Divinity and embrace him, that he needs must go with me into Hell. Therefore I would rather be in Hell, having God, than I would be in Heaven without God.'

"Thereon I understood," says Eckhard, "that true tranquility, with true humility, is the direct Way to God.

"I demanded further of the man: 'Whence art thou?' He answered: 'From God.' I questioned: 'Where hast thou found God?' He replied: 'As I left all creatures.' I asked: 'Where hast thou left God?' 'In the pure heart and in the good-willed man.'

"Again I questioned: 'What art thou?' He said: 'I am a king.' 'Where is thy kingdom?' 'That is in my soul. For I can thus control my internal and external senses that all my desires and soul-forces fully obey me. And this realm is far greater than any kingdom on earth.'

"I asked: 'Then what has brought thee to such perfection?' and he replied: 'That was done by my silence, my exalted thoughts, and my union with God. For I could no more rest in anything that was less than God. Now I have found God and have rest and peace for ever in God.'"

"Though Christ a thousand times in Bethlehem be born
But not within thyself, thy soul will be forlorn:
The Cross of Golgotha thou lookest to in vain,
Unless within thyself it be set up again."

From the German Mystic, Schaffer,
who wrote two centuries ago.

"Let nothing disturb thee;
Let nothing alarm thee;
All passeth away,
God only shall stay."

"Who hath God needeth nothing,
For God is in all;
All things are in God,
So in God thou hast all."

Written in Spanish on the Fly-leaf of the
Breviary of Santa Theresa.

THE THEOSOPHY OF CHRIST.

We have kept to the last the most simple and sublime of all the texts of true Christian Theosophy, namely, those that were given us by Christ himself, in order that their sublime eloquence may linger last and longest on the ear, and that their True Wisdom may sink deepest into the minds of our readers.

All those who call themselves by the name of Christ, be they Catholic, Protestant, or so-called "Orthodox" (of the Greek Church), confess with their lips that the teachings of Christ are divine; in other words, that he has given them the Words of Eternal Life; and each in some way expects to "*be saved*" by confessing their belief in him, and calling on his Name. Many hold that he died to appease his Father's "wrath" against undeveloped humanity in general (because it had not yet attained spiritual perfection); therefore that he offered himself a willing sacrifice as an Atonement for the shortcomings of animal man, and that for this reason he is called "the Lamb of God which taketh away the sins of the world," and these look upon him as a species of Scape-goat, or at least as a substitute for the sin-offering of the Jews. But these have not studied other Ancient Religions, and are not learned in *Zodiacal Signs.*

All seem to believe, however, that there is some particular and magical influence in the shedding of his blood, saying that the blood of Christ cleanses from all unrighteousness, and that the redeemed of the

Apocalypse must literally have washed their robes and made them *white* in the blood of the Lamb. They do not perceive that this is written in the figurative style of Eastern phraseology, and that they are clinging to the dead Letter of the Word, instead of searching for "the Spirit which giveth Life."

To understand Ancient Scripture, it is first necessary to understand the Ancient Method of expression, and to remember the country from which we received it, and in which, even to this day, they have not learnt the simplicity of language that is daily becoming more acceptable in modern centres of civilization.

In the first place, "*Name*," in Scripture, is always indicative of the nature or quality of the thing signified. The name of Christ signifies the Christ Nature, and to be saved by the name of Christ is to be saved by being of the Christ Nature; for this reason he is called the *way*, the *truth*, and the *life*. And to walk in his way, and keep his commandments, is to be of the truth, and to have the life—to have, in fact, the Christ Spirit in us. This is also exactly the doctrine of Esoteric Buddhism, only instead of calling it "*the Christ*," as we do, our Brothers of the Orient call it "*the Buddhi*," or Sixth Principle in man.

In like manner we know that the blood means, because it *is*, the Life. The blood of Christ therefore, by which we are saved, signifies the Life of Christ in us, and we must be partakers of this blood, or Life, in order to be saved, for only the development of the Christ Nature in us can purify us from the sins of the lower, or animal nature. And this fact is expressed in the Apocalypse in true Oriental style, by the words, washing of material robes and making them white, or pure, in the *blood* of the Lamb (Rev. vii. 18); and in Buddhist Theosophy by attaining to the Sixth Principle, the Spiritual Soul.

Faith in Christ is not, or should not be, a trust in anything that refers to Jesus, but a knowledge of *The Truth.* Not once did he command men to have faith in him, but to believe in the Truth: he said before Pilate, "For this end was I born, for this end came I into the world to bear witness to the Truth." He called himself THE TRUTH, saying, "I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life" (John xiv. 6). "Every man who is of the Truth heareth my voice" (John xviii. 37). And one of the promises he gives to those who follow his teachings, is: "Ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free" (John viii. 32); and another is the following: "The Father shall give you another Comforter, that he may abide with you for ever, even the Spirit of Truth; whom the world cannot receive, because it seeth him not, neither knoweth him: but ye know him, for he dwelleth with you, and shall be *in* you" (John xiv. 16 and 17); and in the two following verses he adds: "I will not leave you comfortless: I will come to you. Yet a little while, and the world seeth me no more; but ye see me: because I live, ye shall live also. At that day ye shall know that I am in the Father, and ye in me, and I in you. He that hath

MY COMMANDMENTS, and *keepeth* them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father, and I will love him, and will manifest myself to him."

These Commandments of Christ—do we keep them? We who call ourselves by his Name, have we any right to do so? Are we really his followers, or have we usurped His name? Are we Christians, or are we of the world of those whom he says cannot receive the Spirit of Truth because it seeth him not?

It is very important that we should sometimes pause and ask ourselves this most necessary question—"Of what Religion are we?" It is easy to reply we are of the Religion of Christ—but is this truly so? have we really the right to bear the Christian Name? It is true we were baptized into His Name; but a mere outward ceremony performed upon an irresponsible little child does not make him a child of God.

We have just read that *Name* in Scripture always means *Nature*; therefore to take upon ourselves the name of Christ implies that we partake of the Nature, or Spirit, of Christ. Jesus said:—

> "He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me. And he that seeth me seeth him that sent me. I am come a light into the world, that whosoever believeth on me should not abide in darkness. And if any man hear my words and believe not, I judge him not: for I came not to judge the world, but to save the world. He that rejecteth me and receiveth not my words, hath one that judgeth him: the word that I have spoken, the same shall judge him in the last day. For I have not spoken of myself, but the Father which sent me, he gave me a commandment what I should say, and what I should speak.

And I know that his commandment is life everlasting: whatsoever I speak therefore, even as the Father said unto me, so I speak" (John xii. 44—50).

"The word which ye hear is not mine, but the Father's which sent me. If a man love me he will keep my commandments, and my Father will love him, and we will come unto him, and make our abode with him" (John xiv. 23, 24).

It is then necessary to keep the commandments given unto us by Christ, in order to become a child of God, and that "the Father should love us, and come unto us, and make His abode with us." But do we keep them? Are we even quite sure that we know what these commandments are? Could we repeat them at this moment by heart, as we have learnt to repeat those given unto us through Moses? And by which are we shaping our lives—by those of Moses, or by the commandments of Christ, who put quite a new spirit into them?

The Divine Commands are based on Eternal Laws, such as the laws of honesty, and temperance, and chastity; in other words, the laws of right and wrong, the laws of love to God and to our neighbours—to which Christ points continually as "*the fulfilling of the Law*," and these Divine Precepts he tells us He came "not to destroy but to fulfil." Indeed we are expressly told that he was a Priest for ever after the Order of Melchisedek. "The priests of that Order being without beginning of days or end of life"; because they deal with the eternal and unchanging principles of Right, which have no beginning and no end, which will be for ever and for ever the same throughout all Dispensations and Cycles of change.

But each Dispensation has its own interpretation of those laws, given through the priests of each particular Age, or Cycle; and these are the priests after the Order of AARON, who dispense to humanity the *external* aspects of truth which are continually varying according to the soul growth of that humanity, so true it is in this case that the contained must be determined by the exact measure of the container—for more it cannot receive and hold.

Thus we find many of the Commandments of Christ in absolute opposition to the laws of Moses and Aaron. And yet we, who have no hesitation in calling ourselves by His name, still continue to live by the laws which he expressly came to abolish, and pay not the slightest attention to the New Commandments he came to give us, although we have been in the habit of reading, or hearing them *occasionally* (!) read, in our churches during the long Dispensation now closing.

It is indeed time that the reign of the SPIRIT OF TRUTH should come, who, Christ has told us, will "*guide us into all truth*"; "for he shall not speak of himself; but whatsoever He shall hear that shall he speak: He shall glorify me; for he shall receive of mine, and shall shew it to you" (John xvi. 13, 14), and again in chapter xiv., "He shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance whatsoever I have said unto you."

We believe that that time *has* come, and that the one whom Christ said should come is now here, and is already silently working among us. In our chapter on the New Dispensation we will point out many signs and proofs that the reign of the "Spirit of Truth, the Comforter," has begun, and that *the time for "making known" has come*; nay, these very lines are a proof that it is so, for are they not endeavouring to revive and bring to our remembrance the teachings of Christ? And for this purpose they will now set clearly before the reader the Commandments given to us so long ago by Christ himself, which, had they been strictly followed by those who call themselves by his Name, would long ere this have produced the result he promised, and the Kingdom would have come for which we pray, had those of Earth "*done* the Lord's will on Earth as it is done in Heaven."

The new Commandments given to humanity by Christ are Five—and they are not taught in Christian Churches—not, at all events, as commandments, although they are read as a part of the Gospel, under the name of "*Beatitudes*," whatever that may mean; but Christ gave them most emphatically as Commandments, saying:—

> "Whosoever shall break one of these least commandments, and shall teach men so, he shall be called the least in the kingdom of heaven: but whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven. For I say unto you that unless your righteousness shall *exceed* the righteousness of the Scribes and Pharisees ye shall in no case enter into the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew v. 19).

1. Ye have heard that it was said by them of old time, thou shalt not kill, and whoever shall kill shall be in danger of the judgment.	1. But I say unto you that whosoever is angry with his brother[*] shall be in danger of the judgment, and whosoever shall say to his brother, Raca,[†] shall be in danger of the council; but whosoever shall say, Thou Fool,[‡] shall be in danger of hell fire.
2. Ye have heard that it was said of old time, thou shalt not commit adultery.	2. But I say unto you that whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart.
3. Again, ye have heard that it hath been said by them of old time, thou shall not forswear thyself, but shall perform unto the Lord thine oaths.	3. But I say unto you, Swear not at all, but let your communications be yea, yea; nay, nay; for whatsoever is more than these cometh of evil.
4. Ye have heard that it hath been said, An eye for an eye, and a tooth for a tooth.	4. But I say unto you that *ye resist not evil*, but whosoever shall smite thee on thy right cheek, turn to him the other also. And if any man will sue thee at the law and take away thy coat, let him have thy cloak also.
5. Ye have heard that it hath been said, Thou shalt love thy neighbour, and hate thine enemy.[§]	5. But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for

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[*] In Luther's Bible, and in all early editions of the Bible, the words "*without a cause*" are not to be found; they were a later addition, but not an improvement to the sense, as of course everyone when he is angry *considers* he has good cause for his anger.

[†] "*Raca*" signifies, in Hebrew, a lost person, one unworthy to be called a man.

[‡] "*Thou Fool.*" Christ forbids us to give way to anger, or to despise our fellow-men; we should honour God in each other, for each is the Temple of the living God.

[§] The word *Neighbour* in the Hebrew language always signifies "a Hebrew"; also in the Gospels the word Neighbour them which despitefully use you and persecute you. That ye may be the children of your Father which is in heaven: for He maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust. . . Be ye therefore perfect even as your Father is perfect.

These, then, are the Five New Commandments given unto us by Christ himself, and they will be found still more amplified in the Fifth Chapter of the Gospel according to Matthew. A very little reflection will convince us that we are neither "doing" or "teaching" these Commandments, but that we are still living according to those of "*old time*," and that the so-called Christian Churches are still teaching what "*was said of old time*," and completely ignoring the Commandments of him who came to bear Witness to the Truth: to that Truth which was to make us free.

I. Christ forbids us to be angry with our brother man; he forbids us to despise him and call him either a lost man or a fool; he commands us to be at peace

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signifies a fellow-countryman (see parable of Good Samaritan, also Acts vii. 27). *Enemy*, in like manner, means a national enemy (see Luke i. 71; Matthew xii. 44; Mark xii. 36; Luke xx. 43). The use of the word enemy in the singular, clearly shows it to refer to a national enemy. The Hebrews were enjoined under the old Law to kill and destroy other nations, and to love their own people. It is impossible to love our *personal* enemies, but we can love men of another nation even as those of our own, and Christ expressly *commands us to love* them; therefore He forbids WAR.

with all men, and to honour God in each other; for each one is the Temple of the living God.

II. Christ commands us to keep this Temple holy and pure, not to defile it by sensual and evil passions; therefore, to avoid temptation, and every occasion for it, the *true* marriage union is sacred and binding; for "*God created man in His own image, male and female created He him;*" and those whom *God* hath joined let not man put asunder. Neither let man attempt to unite those whom God hath decidedly put asunder.

III. Christ commands us to take no oath, "*Swear not at all.*" Swear therefore no allegiance, for it would cause us to break this, and other commandments, by sending us forth at the command of man to murder, and make war, and make desolate the dwellings of those we are commanded by Christ to *love.* "Swear not," "Resist not," "Judge not," "Condemn not." The commandment is clear and simple: Never take an oath under any circumstances, "for every oath is extorted from men for evil." Most blasphemous indeed therefore is it to swear on the very Gospels which forbid it, or on the Cross of Christ, who laid down his life upon it rather than break one of these Commandments by the resistance of evil, which he strictly commands us not to resist.

IV. Christ commands us not *to resist evil.* Think not to destroy evil by evil. In order that evil should cease, *do no evil.* Return not violence for violence. *Resist not Evil.* Overcome evil with Good.

V. Love your enemies. Bless them that curse you. Do good to them that hate you. Pray for them that despitefully use you, that you may be the children of your Father. . . . Be perfect even as your Father is Perfect.

Such perfection as this we have not yet understood; we are only now beginning to perceive it may be true, and that we should do better to follow the commandments of Christ, and see how they will work, since we find that we are no further advanced towards the attainment of perfection, either for ourselves or for the world around us, by having persistently followed the Old Commandments, which Christ came on purpose to abolish, giving us instead these five New Commandments, which are wholly of Love—or Truth. Not only did he call men to have faith in *him*, but also to believe in THE TRUTH—"*the truth shall make you free.*"

But even his own disciples did not understand his doctrine, or perceive that LOVE is the great Truth, the fulfilling of the Law, and the great Mystery of God. That Love would produce Faith, which would remove mountains—mountains of hatred, mountains of evil. And that Love would make them perfect—with the perfection of the Father. If all were animated by this love, the world would be a Paradise, and men would be Angels.

But from the time of his immediate disciples until now, *the fulness of time*, this Great Truth has not been perceived, much less understood and put in practice. They clamoured for rewards, and for the highest places, to sit on his right hand and on his left, and Peter, the chief of the Apostles, asks, "What reward shall we have who have left all and followed thee?" (Matt. xix. 27.) He did not perceive that the reward would be that perfection which would make him a son of God, and one of "the greatest in the kingdom of heaven" (Matthew xviii. 1—4). So far from understanding, directly after this gracious answer, Peter again asks, "How oft shall my brother sin against me and I forgive him? till seven times?" To which Jesus replies, "I say not unto thee until seven times, but until seventy times seven."

This has not been so far the Theosophy of "Christians," but it is the Theosophy of Christ, who carried out his own commandment, *not to resist evil*, even to the death of the body, which death gives eternal life to the Soul. There is that, however, in the higher nature of every man, which causes this Theosophy to thrill through his Soul like the sound of many waters (of purification), through which is heard the long low echo of a heavenly voice from his distant home, assuring him of its TRUTH; and although he has not yet seen it working that revolution on earth which it is destined to work in the New Dispensation, when Love which is "the Spirit of Truth," and the Comforter, shall reign over Hatred, which is the Spirit of Falsehood and Evil, yet he knows in his heart of hearts that it is the very highest Theosophy, for in it dwells the Love and the Wisdom of God.

WHAT IS TRUE CHRISTIANITY?*

"Words have a certain meaning fixed by their etymology, and no amount of perversion can change their true meaning. Christianity has a meaning which all history cannot destroy. As Spiritualism means devotion to spiritual principles; Buddhism devotion to the doctrines of Buddha; Mahometanism devotion to the doctrines of Mahomet, and Confucianism to the doctrines of Confucius; as does Christianity mean devotion to the principles of Christ, while devotion to the principles of a Church can have no better name than Churchianity; and I hold that Christianity and Churchianity are as far apart as the heavens and the earth.

"Christ-ian or Christian signifies corresponding to Christ or resembling Christ, or derived from Christ, or in any way connected with Christ. And if Christ is nothing but the proper name of a certain man, then Christian means simply a follower of that man. But Christ is not strictly the name of a person: and true Christianity is therefore not a merely personal religion, whatever the Church may be.

"Christ is an adjective expressing the quality and characteristics of the inspired teacher. It comes from the Greek, and in Greek it is not a proper name, but an adjective which may be applied according to merit. Yet it has been so universally applied to Jesus that many suppose it to be his proper name, though it is simply a title of honour applied to him, which might also be applied to others if they were deemed worthy. The word does not confine us to Jesus or the Church. On the contrary, Jesus himself would tell you to go forth in freedom and find all the Christs you can in history, and when you have found them, to give them love and honour, and assist their work —to go on the line of duty until you become, if possible, a Christ yourself.

. . . . "You understand that Christ is not a personal name, although it may be connected with the name of Jesus;

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* The above extracts are from a discourse delivered quite lately in Boston by Professor J. R. Buchanan, and are so much to the point that we do not hesitate to add them to this chapter, although it has already exceeded the limits we had intended.

and hence, the Christian is not necessarily a follower of Jesus, unless he shall recognize him as his Christ. That which truly constitutes the Christian is the following of heavenly-inspired teaching—or the highest teaching of heaven to mortals. Who are the highest teachers is a distinct question.

"The word Christ is a very noble word. There is no grander title under heaven by which we can assume our proper position and present ourselves before mankind in the most dignified and worthy manner; and for one, I am not willing to surrender this advantage. It has been a tower of strength to the apostate Church, which has claimed to be following Christ when it was really following Constantine, and drawing its inspirations from the barbarisms of Moses.

"In like manner, the physical process of anointing, which carries with it the magnetism of him who anoints and leaves the oil to retain it, corresponds to the spiritual process of anointing or imparting spiritual power. And this process is peculiar, as it differs from inspiration which may be inspired to-day, and to-morrow in the gutter. The medium may be grandly eloquent, but when left to himself puerile and unreliable. Thus, inspiration is variable and unequal, and comes to many; but the anointing which makes the Christ is a permanent development of the godlike elements in man, possible only with those who have been born with the noblest capacities. It becomes a part of his nature, and never leaves him. He walks with God in all things, and becomes a safe and reliable leader for humanity.

"In this we see that Jesus was not only an inspired Medium, but a true Christ, or Messiah—a man representing the divine elements, and fitted to call men up to the divine life."

. . . .

"I know that a grand work was done by those gifted and great spirits, Confucius and Buddha; but I propose to show at the proper time that their work was incomplete, was not a full-orbed Christianity such as came by Jesus, and that the finger of God has written on the human constitution in greater amplitude the same laws which were expounded by Jesus.

"To understand that this grand religion of nature, of science, and of inspiration, is most properly to be called Christianity, and that there is no other proper name for it, let us look at the original word, and its analogues in the Greek. Christianity comes from the Greek word *Christos*, which is the translation of the Hebrew Messiah (Messias or Mashiach). These words alike mean the anointed one. Kings, prophets, and high priests were consecrated to their office by anointing. The anointed one, therefore, means the one chosen, ordained, crowned, or consecrated to a high office. The prophecies of Isaiah, David, and Daniel, had long promised the Jews that their great Messiah or anointed one should come. The line of prophecy ran far back.

"The Jews were therefore expecting their Messiah, and were probably influenced also by the promise of Isaiah that a Virgin should bear a son and call him Immanuel. And a few faithful men and women who could realize the spiritual greatness of Jesus, recognized him as their Messiah and called him Jesus the Christ; and with those few followers in that sink of iniquity and violence, where no man's life was safe from the mob or assasin, he inspired a zeal and devotion which impressed the best of the Jewish race; and afterwards by their earnest eloquence and courage, facing death, overturned Paganism, took possession of the Roman Empire, and finally of all the leading civilized nations of the world, with the grand inspiration of that young carpenter who died before he had attained the prime of life. I need no better evidence than this of his greatness and divine inspiration; for the great men of history are those who make a great impression on mankind, change the destiny of nations and originate new eras.

"Such was he whom history calls Messias, Christos, or Christ, because he was what those words mean; and as language is settled by usage, we cannot now change the usage of centuries or cease to recognize him as Christ."

. . . .

"Thus, Chres or Chris is the Greek expression for that which is just, good, and beautiful, or which comes from heaven; and the word Chrestos was so closely associated with divinity that it was often applied by the Greeks to Apollo and other gods. Chrises or Chriseos signifies anointing, and Christerion the ointment; and the words Chrisma and Chrism are used for the oil of baptism, ordination, and unction, which was anciently used all over the body and not confined to the head."

. . . .

"Language would utterly fail to depict the glory of the Christian lives of love in tens of thousands all along the centuries, from the times when they were hunted like wild beasts in Asia Minor, and slaughtered in the valleys of the Alps, burned at the stake by the Inquisition, and massacred by thousands all over France. All along the fifteen hundred years of persecution and darkness—persecution inflicted mainly by the Church, Christian love and heroism shine like stars at night, and teach us the grandeur and loveliness of human nature when man is inspired by heaven, and follows in the pathway of Christ.

"Having settled the meaning of Christianity, let us ask if Christianity has a historical record as well as Churchianity.

"The record of Churchianity is known of all men as well as that of Tamerlane, Genghis Khan, or Napoleon; for it is a record of power, splendour, and crime, and blood-sprinkled splendours have always been known, studied, and admired all over the world; but the record of true Christianity has not much on which historians love to dwell; for it is a record of the humble virtues unknown to fame—of wives and mothers living and dying for their children; of solitary students giving their lives for a Wisdom to which the world would not listen; of profound and independent thinkers, like Roger Bacon, living in peril from the barbarisms of the Church; of brave and honest men imprisoned in the dungeons of the Church, or burned in its fires before unpitying mobs of priests; of noble souls like Socrates and Hypatia, overwhelmed by brutal mobs while on earth, but shining out from the blackness of history like stars in the midnight sky. It is a record of men and women who have dared all things in time of pestilence, when the plague was a terror indeed, ravaging like a prairie fire; of patriots who have stood for liberty against imperial tyranny when resistance was certain death; a record of the hunted and outlawed, hiding in caves, forests, and deserts; a record of millions slain in battles, slain in prisons, slain by fire because they dared to follow the precepts and example of the Christ of Palestine. Oh! what a mighty army of martyrs has followed the glorious path of the great martyr of Calvary. For, as it was in the beginning, so it is now; but, thank God, I do not think it will continue one century longer. The world of Mammon is at war with the world of Christ. It was once a deadly war, as fierce as that of the tomahawking savage; but the war is nearly over now. No Quaker will ever again be hung in Boston; no witch ever burned in England; no Bruno burned in Rome; no Galileo sent to the dungeon; no Servetus burned by Presbyterians; no worthy citizens will be either hung or burned for heresy by the Episcopal Church; no Episcopal Church will lend its sanction to the men who would imprison and hang a Washington if they had the physical power; no papal Church will let loose the dogs of war upon an amiable and peaceful race in Mexico and South America; no wealthy and powerful nation will be ruined into desolation, as Germany was by the thirty years' war.

"These things can never be again, for the power of the political Church is broken for ever; crushed and confiscated in Mexico, robbed of the papal sovereignty in Europe, and soon to be disestablished in England. The earthly power that Constantine established; the national Church, the political Church, the tax-gathering Church, the heretic-burning Church, is dying—dying—passing away for ever, for there is no resurrection to a buried falsehood: and the grand commonwealth of Christ is coming in its place, the commonwealth of him whose realm is not of earth but of heaven; the grand original Democrat, among whose true followers the leader, the great man, the first in rank, is but the servant of the people, ready, if need be, to wash the feet of the humblest disciple; wearing no crown, carrying no sword, gathering no taxes, showing no learned pedantry, making no long prayers, shunning no truth, loving all men, and ever ready to help; but loving especially his ascended brethren, who came from heaven to bring that immortal life and healing power for body and soul, which is expressed in unlimited love, the love that teems from his countenance and tells all men he is their friend. That is the mark of Christianity. If you cannot see in a man's face that he is your friend, your reliable friend, he does not belong to the realm of Christianity; but he may belong to the Church of Constantine, which has so often feasted its eyes on the death agonies of Christians, and on battle-fields where patriots were slaughtered.

"How few ever reflect seriously on the fact that Jesus Christ never founded a Church, nor gave a hint for any plan of Church organization. Church organization arose spontaneously among the half-converted, superstitious heathens, and in a semi-barbarous society, pervaded in every generation by the agitations of blood and plunder; and thus the foundations of the Church were laid in superstition, violence, and moral corruption. And at the end of the third century this seething mass of superstition, with its vast array of bishops and priests, appeared to Constantine a stronger organization for his purposes than the old pagan priesthood.

This man Constantine was a magnificent criminal. He had destroyed his three competitors for the empire; he had murdered his wife, and his most promising son, his brother-in-law, and his young nephew of only eleven years. He was a profligate and a glutton as well as a murderer; and in his maudlin brain he mixed up Jesus Christ and Apollo—having Apollo on one side and the name of Jesus on the other side of his coins; but when he leaned to the Church, he was recognized as a saint, fully endorsed by St. Jerome and by Eusebius, and canonized as St. Constantine by the Greek Church. He gave a start to the papacy by giving the palace of the Lateran at Rome to Bishop Sylvester; and when he called together the first universal council of the Church, the only universal council but one, he was surrounded by a mass of moral corruption equivalent to his own character. It was this council, dominated by this man, which struck down the only rational Christian among them, the exemplary Arius, who was born 1500 years too soon for his own welfare, and laid the broad foundations of the Church on permanent and irrepressible hostility to the Church of Christ: devoted to war instead of peace; to ostentation and tyranny instead of humility; to persecution and hate instead of love, forgetting every principle taught by Christ, and quarrelling with warlike and ferocious zeal about the nature of the Trinity as the only theme that interested them. Effects are always like their causes, and Constantine with his Œcumenical Council of Nice, was the head of that apostacy which has persecuted Christianity wherever it appeared, warred against science and held all Europe stagnant in the dark ages, when civilization was saved by the Mahometan power.

"But was Christianity annihilated when Constantine established Churchianity, with its priestcraft and its religious wars? Not at all. It was outlawed, but not annihilated. Far away from the pomp and corruption of cities, Christianity lived in humble, faithful souls. The Paulicians, the Albigenses, and Waldenses, sought in vain to live in peace as rational Christians, free from superstition, and the whole power of the Church was brought to bear for their utter extermination by sword and fire. It is too horrible a narrative to be recited now. Never since human events have been recorded by historians has there been anything so thoroughly and entirely diabolical as the persecutions of Christians by the Church, extending from the time of Constantine to the 18th century. The murder of Hypatia at Alexandria in the 5th century, by a mob of ferocious priests, who tore her body into pieces, is a single instance from which we may learn the spirit of the Church of Constantine. But the tiger of the 5th century has lost his teeth and claws, and some believe that he may yet become a lamb; that Spiritualism will complete the change that science and democracy have begun."

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. . . . . . "But I do not reject history because it is mingled with myth. I have a profound reverence for Quetzalcoatl, for Krishna, and for Jesus, for these were real men, real heroes, real Christs—fitted to lead us to a higher life. But the man of Nazareth is the one who comes nearest to us as an inspired teacher. My soul goes out to him in love, and I hope to see the Church of Christ the martyr, yet rule the world, for I see the mighty Church of Constantine, the murderer, is tottering to its fall, and upon its ruins the good men of all nations who look to heaven for guidance, may unite in the true Church Universal.

"That being the case, I look upon the three great systems of Christianity, and the three great Christs, Jesus of Palestine, Krishna of India, and Quetzalcoatl of Mexico, as three distinct evolutions of one religion on earth, inspired and sustained from heaven. For that which has been in one country is that which we will find in another. On different continents we find the same soil, the same trees, the same animals, the same human beings, with a little variation, and similar forms of government, religion, marriage, agriculture, arts, and sciences.

"Christianity in Palestine, Christianity in India, and Christianity in Mexico, are all substantially the same thing, all inspired from heaven through a grand leader or Christ, and all running through human debasement into the same forms and errors, but perhaps less debased in that most ancient Church of Mexico than in any other; for there was not wickedness enough in the original Mexican nature to suggest the idea of hell, which has been the debasing element in the Church of Constantine.

"We thus arrive at the conclusion that there is one great religion of all humanity, and that its proper name is Christianity; that in all ages it is encumbered by superstitions, by ceremonies, and by the corrupting influence of politics, wealth, power, selfishness, and WAR; and that when we revert to fundamental principles, when we follow the principles of Christ in their purity, and open our souls to the direct influence of the Divine and all the hosts of heaven, which is the aim of spiritual religion, we have relieved ourselves of errors, solved the problem, and established the Universal Church of Humanity."

This Extract is so very long already that we have felt obliged to omit many paragraphs which, nevertheless, would have added greatly to its interest—such are the analogies between those whom Professor Buchanan calls the "real Christs" of the Ages. The teachings of the heavenly Krishna, as given in his dialogues with his disciple Arjun (or John) in the Bhagavat-Gita, are, as he says, rich in the sweetest and most sublime teachings of religion, such as every sincere Christian must recognize and reverence. He was the grandest moral figure of ancient times, and the greatest philosopher of the whole world. He was recognized as the "Divine Word," and his disciples gave him the name of Jezeus, which signifies pure essence. He was often styled the promised of God, and the Messiah. This Christ of India lived so far back, that history cannot say whether it was one, or three thousand years before our own Christ.

The Mexicans, according to Humboldt ("*S. American Researches*," Vol. I., p. 249), have an antiquity of 18,000 years, and hence their system of religion was the most ancient known on earth When the Spaniards arrived there, led by Hernan Cortes, they found to their great surprise images both of the Virgin and child, and of the Christ crucified between two malefactors. The Christ was not named Jesus but Quetzalcoatl, and his Mother was called the queen of heaven, and worshipped, as they themselves worshipped the Virgin Mary.* In fact, they found that the religion and all its traditions was substantially the same as their own Christianity, which would show, not that Christianity had been plagiarized either from India or Mexico, with which country there was no communication till fifteen centuries later, but that this saving truth, (namely, the crucifixion of the earthly man as necessary for the salvation of the heavenly man), has been revealed to humanity at different epochs and in

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* See Lord Kingsborough's fine work on the Antiquities of Mexico, particularly Vol. VI. He says (page 100): "The temptation of Quetzalcoatl, the fast of forty days ordained by the Mexican Ritual, the Cup with which he was presented to drink, the Morning Star, which he is designated, the *teepatl* or Stone which was laid on his Altar, and called *teotecpatl*, or divine Stone, which was likewise an object of worship; all these circumstances connected with Quetzalcoatl are very curious resemblances." Again he says (page 114): "The Mexicans baptized their children, and the water which they used they called *the water of regeneration.*" At the end of October they had a festival exactly answering to our All Saints, and All Souls. They call it the *Festival of Advocates*, because each human being had an Advocate to plead for him (page 101).

Quetzalcoatl is represented in the paintings of the Codex Borgianus nailed to the cross, and sometimes even the two thieves different parts of the world; it is the most ancient, and therefore will probably be the most enduring on earth, nay, must be so, since it is the only means of uniting earth with heaven, or of preparing the Son of Man to become the Son of God; it is, therefore, substantially the religion of all past, as of all coming ages.

In the Foot-note we have given copious extracts from well-known and highly accredited authors, after reading which, and studying the divinely inspired teachings of Christna in the Bhagavat-Gita who can doubt any longer of the Unity of these Divine Messengers, and of the gradual evolution of the One Great Truth they came to live, and to inculcate, and for which they died the self-same death, that of the Crucifixion of the body, or lower nature (the Son of Man), in order that the higher should be lifted up, and ascend into heaven as the Son of God. This is the

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are there crucified with him (page 166). The Immaculate Conception is described in the Codex Vaticanus; *Suchiquetzl* was the Virgin Mother of Quetzalcoatl. *Sochiquetzl* means *the lifting up of Roses.* Eve is called *Suchiquetzl,* and is said to have sinned by plucking *roses,* but in another place these roses are called *Fruta del Arbor.* A messenger from heaven announced to her that she should bear a Son who should bruise the Serpent's head. He presents her with a rose. The Mohamedans have a tradition that Christ was *conceived* by the smelling of a Rose. Lord Kingsborough shows that Mesitli, or Mexico, is precisely the same as the Hebrew word משיח msih, messiah, or anointed. This was the commencement of an Age, which was called *The Age of Roses.* In India this is called the Age of the Lotus (the Water Rose). He was the Rose of Sharon, that is, the Rose of Ishuren, or the God of the country where the language is called the pollen or the *Flower.* (See pages 175, 176.)

great truth written from all eternity on the "*Starry Scriptures of the Sky*," or heavenly Planisphere of every Nation of Antiquity throughout the world, and enacted year by year by the apparent course of the Life-giving Sun, the Shekinah, or manifestation of the Logos, or Wisdom to earth, as if to remind and guide children to their heavenly inheritance.

The celebrated work of Dupuis, "*L'origine des Cultes*," and the no less important "VERITAS" of the late Henry Melville, are real treasures to the true Theosophist, who knows the interior Spiritual truth contained in the Science of Astro-Masonry, and are therefore of far greater value than their authors could ever have conceived; for, with all their learning, they were but outsiders, and appear to have had no idea whatever of the Esoteric truth contained in the exact Science they have been the means of so ably giving to the Theosophic Student. But were we, like these authors, to accept *literally* the Allegory pictured on the starry skies, without comprehending the Spiritual significance it contains, it would be to assume that the wise men of old actually worshipped the sun, moon, and stars; but the ancients never enunciated sacred ideas except in allegorical forms, and never Mapped out an Allegory without its veiling a profound Spiritual meaning. "*As above so below*"; "*On the earth as in the skies*," were the sentences by which the ancient mystics were accustomed to affirm the universal correspondence between the harmonies of the natural and spiritual in every department of being.

The Labours of Hercules were depicted on the heavenly chart as emblematic memorials for all time of what the living Son of God, or Spiritual Soul *in* humanity, was to do and to suffer. Osiris, Christna, Wittoba, Buddha, Jesus, and all the so-called Sun-Gods, had the same history, and were all complete types of the Christ, or Saviour, *in* man. To view it otherwise would be to accept the Letter without the Spirit, the Mystery without the Meaning, the Body without the Soul.

THE CHRIST is indeed the central or spiritual Sun of human life; the source of its better inspiration, and the genius of its supreme evolution and final ascension.

Surely no unprejudiced person can fail to perceive that the symbolic history of the Sun-God, so generally engrafted into all ancient religions for thousands of years before the time of Jesus, was again fulfilled in his life and death. When this suffering divinely-inspired Being enters upon the Scene, and our humanity can look up, and feel his kind hands healing their sicknesses, and hear his tender tones of compassion bringing them nearer and nearer to the awful Majesty of the Unknown God, translating that Majesty into the pitying and human character of a Father, can we wonder that he is recognized as the manifestation of the promised Saviour of the race, the one who had been allegorically pictured on "the starry Scriptures of the sky" by the Divine hand of that beneficent Father, and whose expected coming had been recorded in every succeeding religious worship of fallen man?

CHAPTER XI.

THE THEOSOPHIC INTERPRETATION OF THE BIBLE.

"ALL that is true is *Spiritual;* no chapter in the Bible bears a physical meaning. For Matter as it now exists shall cease, and all that is of it, but the Word of the Lord shall endure for ever. And how shall it endure except it be purely Spiritual; since when Matter ceases it would then be no longer comprehensible?"

"That which is lasting and true is for Spirit alone."

CONCERNING THE INTERPRETATION OF SCRIPTURE.

(A Fragment.)

PART I.

"*If, therefore, they be Mystic Books, they ought also to have a Mystic Consideration. But the Fault of most Writers lieth in this,—that they distinguish not between the Books of Moses the Prophet, and those Books which are of an historical nature. And this is the more surprising, because not a few of such Critics have rightly discerned the Esoteric Character, if not indeed the true Interpretation, of the story of Eden; yet have they not applied to the Remainder of the Allegory the same Method which they found to fit the Beginning; but so soon as they are over the earlier*

Stanzas of the Poem, they would have the Rest of it to be of another Nature.

"*It is, then, pretty well established and accepted of most Authors, that the Legend of Adam and Eve, and of the Miraculous Tree and the Fruit which was the Occasion of Death, is, like the Story of Eros and Psyche, and so many others of all Religions, a Parable with a hidden, that is, with a Mystic Meaning. But so also is the Legend which follows concerning the Story of Cain and Abel his Brother; the Story of the Flood; of the Ark; of the saving of the clean and unclean Beasts; of the Rainbow; of the twelve Children of Jacob; and, not stopping there, of the whole Relation concerning the Flight out of Egypt. For it is not to be supposed that the two Sacrifices offered to God by the Sons of Adam, were real Sacrifices, any more than it is to be supposed that the Apple which caused the Doom of Mankind, was a real Apple. It ought to be known, indeed, for the right Understanding of the Mystical Books, that in their Esoteric Sense they deal, not with material Things, but with Spiritual Realities; and that as Adam is not a Man, nor Eve a Woman, nor the Tree a Plant in its true Signification, so also are not the Beasts named in the same Books real Beasts, but that the Mystic Intention of them is implied. When, therefore, it is written that Abel took of the Firstlings of his Flock to offer unto the Lord, it is signified that he offered that which a Lamb implies, and which is the holiest and highest of Spiritual Gifts. Nor is Abel himself a real Person, but the Type and spiritual Presentation of the Race of the Prophets; of whom also Moses was a Member, together with the Patriarchs. Were the Prophets, then, Shedders of Blood? God forbid! they dealt not* *with Things material, but with spiritual Significations. Their Lambs without Spot, their White Doves, their Goats, their Rams, and other Sacred Creatures, are so many Signs and Symbols of the various Graces and Gifts which a Mystic People should offer to Heaven. Without such Sacrifices is no Remission of Sin. But when the Mystic Sense was lost, then Carnage followed, the Prophets ceased out of the Land, and the Priests bore rule over the People. Then, when again the Voice of the Prophets arose, they were constrained to speak plainly, and declared in a Tongue foreign to their Method, that the Sacrifices of God are not the Flesh of Bulls, or the Blood of Goats, but holy Vows and sacred Thanksgivings, their Mystical Counterparts. As God is a Spirit, so also are His Sacrifices Spiritual. What Folly, what Ignorance, to offer material Flesh and Drink to pure Power and essential Being! Surely in vain have the Prophets spoken, and in vain have the Christs been manifested!*

"*Why will you have Adam to be Spirit, and Eve Matter, since the Mystical Books deal only with Spiritual Entities? The Tempter himself even is not Matter, but that which gives Matter the Precedence. Adam is, rather, intellectual Force: he is of Earth. Eve is the moral Conscience: she is the Mother of the Living. Intellect, then, is the Male, and Intuition, the female Principle. And the Sons of Intuition, herself fallen, shall at last recover Truth and redeem all Things. By her Fault, indeed, is the moral Conscience of Humanity made subject to the Intellectual Force, and thereby all Manner of Evil and Confusion abounds, since her desire is unto him, and he rules over her until now. But the End foretold by the Seer is not far off. Then shall the Woman be exalted, clothed* *with the Sun, and carried to the Throne of God. And her Sons shall make War with the Dragon, and have Victory over him. Intuition, therefore, pure and Virgin, shall be the Mother and Redemptress of her fallen Sons, whom she bore under Bondage to her Husband the Intellectual Force, who now hath Dominion. . . .*"

PART II.

"*Moses, therefore, knowing the Mysteries of the Egyptian Religion, and having learned of their Occultists the Value and Signification of all Sacred Birds and Beasts, delivered like Mysteries to his own People. But certain of the Sacred Animals of Egypt he retained not in Honour, for Motives which were equally of Mystic Origin. And he taught his Initiated the spirit of the heavenly Hieroglyphs, and bade them, when they made Festival before God, to carry with them in Procession, with Music and with Dancing, such of the Sacred Animals as were, by their interior Significance, related to the Occasion. Now, of these Beasts, he chiefly selected Males of the first Year, without Spot or Blemish, to signify that it is beyond all Things Needful that Man should dedicate to the Lord his Intellect and his Reason, and this from the Beginning and without the least Reserve. And that he was very wise in teaching this, is evident from the History of the World in all Ages, and particularly in these last Days. For what is it that has led Men to renounce the Realities of the Spirit, and to propagate false Theories and corrupt Sciences, denying all Things save the Appearance, which can be apprehended by the outer Senses, and making themselves one with the Dust of the Ground? It is their Intellect which, being un-*

sanctified, has led them astray; it is the Force of the Mind in them, which, being corrupt, is the Cause of their own Ruin, and of that of their Disciples. As, then, the Intellect is apt to be the great Traitor against Heaven, so also is it the Force by which Men, following their pure Intuition, may also grasp and apprehend the Truth. For which Reason it is written that the Christs are subject to their Mothers. Not that by any means the Intellect is to be dishonoured; for it is the Heir of all Things, if only it be truly begotten, and no Bastard.

"*And, besides all these Symbols, Moses taught the People to have, beyond all Things, an Abhorrence of Idolatry. What, then, is Idolatry, and what are False Gods?*

"*To make an Idol, is to materialise Spiritual Mysteries. The Priests, then, were Idolators, who, coming after Moses, and committing to Writing those Things which he, by Word of Mouth, had delivered unto Israel, replaced the true Things signified, by their material Symbols, and shed innocent Blood on the pure Altars of the Lord.*

"*They also are Idolators, who understand the Things of Sense where the Things of the Spirit are alone implied, and who conceal the true Features of the Gods with material and spurious Presentations. Idolatry is Materialism, the common and original Sin of Men, which replaces Spirit by Appearance, Substance by Illusion, and leads both the moral and intellectual Being into Error, so that they substitute the Nether for the Upper, and the Depth for the Height. It is that false Fruit which attracts the outer Senses, the Bait of the Serpent in the Beginning of the World. Until the Mystic Man and Woman had eaten of this*

Fruit, they knew only the Things of the Spirit, and found them suffice. But after their Fall, they began to apprehend Matter also, and gave it the Preference, making themselves Idolators. And their Sin, and the Taint begotten of that false Fruit, have corrupted the Blood of the whole Race of Men, from which Corruption the Sons of God would have redeemed them."

[From a Fragment, forming part of Appendix
No. I. of "THE PERFECT WAY."]

The Bible is a collection of Theosophic writings, that within their literal have also an occult meaning; the interpretation of which forms one of the chief branches of Christian Theosophy.

Man is instructed universally through the agency of symbolic utterances in the Word. The Universe itself, with all its exquisite living representations, is but a pictorial Scripture of the Infinite.

The door to all Divine symbolism is in the human breast; but that door is unclosed by the Hand that "opens, and no man shuts," and that "shuts, and no man opens." Often the door is shut, leaving the student in the possession of a certain limited knowledge; yet then it is not to be supposed that the Cabinet is exhausted of its contents. The more we learn to see in the Bible the history not of physical or personal beings—as Adam, Eve, Jesus, etc., but of the human Soul, individual or collective—the more convinced we must be of the inanity of all other modes of interpretation. The materialisation of the Soul by its persistent over-inclination to the things of the flesh, constitutes Sin, of which the wages are death. The crucifixion of the flesh, by renunciation of all things lowering to the Soul, makes a new because wholly spiritual man, even "Christ," and secures to us that gift of God, Eternal Life. Soul is only deathless when it accomplishes its immortal union with the Divine Spirit; this is what constitutes the Eternal and Divine Individuality, "*The Father and I are one;*" and until we become spiritually manifest in this union, we have merely the personality of Self, which is mortality.

"He to whom Time is as Eternity and Eternity as Time is delivered from all strife," writes Jacob Böhme. "He who believes will not make haste," says the Lord, and this truth is well illustrated by the allegory of Passion and Patience in Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress.

The subject matter whereon the books of the Bible treat is of an eternal, not of a temporal nature, and the physical symbols used have each and all a spiritual meaning. It may be questioned, What necessity was there for concealment, and why all this precaution? This the author of *Christ the Spirit* appropriately elucidates as follows, alluding, however, in this instance, more particularly to the Gospel narratives:

> "It was undoubtedly the opinion of the time, how far just or otherwise I cannot say, that the common people could not understand the doctrine of the Spirit, the essential Truth which was taught figuratively and symbolically through Christ; and hence we read of cautions not to throw pearls to swine, and not to give the children's bread to dogs; and we are expressly told that Christ spake 'to the people' only in parables.
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> "One of the reasons for this must be explained by the suppositi-

tion that the real authors or writers of the Gospels belonged to a (masonic) brotherhood, the Essenes, sworn to hold their doctrine of the Spirit a secret; though this secrecy itself must have grown out of the opinion that, to the generality of men, the Spirit of Truth is not only invisible, but incomprehensible; and such men, it was thought, must be left in possession of their idols, the *letter*, the *water*, the *flesh*, the *bread*, as the next best thing; the Spirit (of truth) having originally generated the letter through the great teachers of the nation, Moses and the prophets. . . .

"The carpenter's son had a predecessor in Hiram, the Builder of a house not made with hands. Christ is the mysterious life that builds the Temple of the Holy Ghost."

"The Freemasons of the present day not only claim through their accredited lecturers, as by Dr. Oliver and others, that Freemasonry has come down from the Essenes, but they assert that the Essenes were in possession of what they call the Temple secrets in the days of Solomon. . . .

"There is no mention made of the Essenes in the New Testament, except as the 'brethren,' for the Essenes knew each other as brethren, as do the Freemasons at the present day, who claim a descent from them. . . .

"The writers of the Gospels are supposed to have belonged to a peculiar sect or society among the Jews, who had an opinion pointing to a secret meaning, or spiritual sense, as being contained in the letter of the Old Testament. This was what, in their conventional language, they called the *children's bread* (Matt. xv. 26), regarding it as too sacred for the profane. This secret doctrine *was not to be thrown to the 'dogs,'* as the profane were called. The truths they saw in the Scriptures under the letter, they also called *pearls*, which, as something 'holy,' was not to be cast before 'swine' (Matt. vii. 6). The letter of the Scripture they likened to water; but its internal sense was likened to *wine*, the juice of the Vine, and was called the Spirit.

"The Gospels were written by Therapeutæ residing at Alexandria. The scene was laid, with great propriety, at Jerusalem; because that was the head-quarters of the worldly priesthood, who had made the law of no effect by their traditions; and these were made the murderers of the Spirit, personified in Christ to represent the doctrine that the letter killeth; and yet the Spirit of Truth was exhibited as rising again, and appearing to its followers; for this illustrates the privilege of those who possess faith in God's Holy Law in the heart—the true Christ according to St. Paul. . . .

"In the history or histories of Christ we have a representation, in the form of history, or biography, of the *Life*, or Spirit, of the Hebrew sacred books, such as it was conceived to be by the members of a secret society or brotherhood, described by Josephus as the Essenes, and referred to also under this name by Philo, who gives, however, a more detailed account of them as Therapeutæ, or physicians,—meaning physicians of the soul, as the historian expressely states. . . . .

"Jesus, however real a personage he might have been, and there is no disposition to deny the reality of his life, within the range of possibility, was made, nevertheless, the basis of a mythical history of the Life or power of the sacred writings, as understood by the Essenes; and in this allusion to *Blood* and *Water*, as flowing from a wound in the side, the writer of the Gospel indicates, as I say, his repesentative character; and that he represented the *Spirit* and the Letter of the Hebrew Scriptures—here symbolized by Blood and Water," etc.

"At this (the Apostles') period the written Gospels were not publicly known. But, as we may readily suppose, the preaching of St. Paul forced them out of the hands of the Essenes, and they became public through the unavoidable mixture of the converts of St. Paul with the genuine Essenes; for they both held, in fact, the same doctrine. . . .

"Hence, as the accessions from 'without' increased, a diluting process became inevitable. Many of the converts from the Sadducees, Pharisees, and Gentiles, could not understand the doctrine of the Spirit; and as this class increased, a division grew up among the followers of the Truth. The weak would have a real historical person, just as the more weak, even in our own times, must have images and relics—unable to worship God in Spirit and in truth (John iv. 24). The real Essenes remained in possession of their secret, while a nominal portion of them received the name of Christians, which was given to them at Antioch (Acts xi. 29). And this portion, always tending to a majority—till visited anew by the Spirit of Truth—finally superseded, numerically, the original sect; and the mythical history of Jesus began to be regarded as veritable history.

"Many of the so-called Fathers of the Church, however, continued to be imbued with the Spirit of Truth, and saw well enough that the Gospels were symbolic books, needing interpretation; but as they were probably members of the secret fraternity, they could not openly declare the Truth. These finally fell into a decided minority, and gradually receded from popular observation, leaving the more numerous and probably noisy new-comers in possession of the public eye and ear.

"But the Essene doctrine was not lost. It has come down to the present time, and it never can be lost; for as often as it is buried under the letter or the mere forms of the Church, it will 'come forth' again. Truth cannot die: and this is, itself, the great Truth which is taught in the gospel representation of the death and resurrection of Christ—the Spirit of Truth—murdered by the Jewish Priesthood. This same Truth, overlaid and buried in forms and ceremonies and traditions from age to age, is perpetually rising again and again, and teaching the doctrine of itself. Heaven and earth shall pass away, but the Truth shall not pass away. Whosoever loves anything better than he loves Truth, does not love Christ; for Christ is the Spirit of Truth.

"Many of the early Fathers, in all probability Essenes themselves, were allegorists either upon one or more, and some upon all, of the miracles of Jesus. Origen was the most thorough; but St. Augustine, St. Jerome, St. Theophylact, St. John of Jerusalem, St. Hylary, St. Gregory the Great, Eusebius, Gallicanus, St. Theophilus of Antioch, St. Cyril of Alexandria, St. Irencus, and others, were all of them to a greater or less extent allegorists."

What is here chiefly spoken of the New Testament also refers to the Old. The Allegory of the historical relations of both Old and New Testament is undeniable. The New Testament could not be considered allegorical if the Old Testament were not also full of allegorical relations. The Hebrew Kabbalist, who with more force than grace, enunciated the sentence "Cursed is he who reads the Sacred Writings as though they were books of tales," very decidedly affirms the allegorical mode of interpretation to be the only true one.

The New Testament assumes the existence of the Old without going into an investigation of its origin or history; and thus the sacred writings are throughout said to be sealed with seven seals, or composed expressly in an idiom which we cannot decipher without the key, but which we are capable of comprehending so soon as we receive it. In a word the Scriptures can only be rightly understood in their inner or Esoteric meaning.

For our own part, we verily believe that all the historical facts recorded in the Word *may also be true in the sense of the Letter;* and that if that sense be taken away, the Soul of the Word would be deprived of its body, and no other body is fitter for it to dwell in than that which has been given to it of old, to make it correspond with the things in man. And if it be not applied to the things in man, it is no better than any other historical narrative in which the providence of God is always apparent to properly trained minds.

We are informed by Swedenborg, that "in all the Letter of the Word there is an inward sense; even a connected chain from first to last, contained within the Letter, like a man's soul in his body. Now, since this is the case, how would it be with a man if some parts of his body were taken away, and other things of a different quality were put in the place thereof? This is the case with those who lose their limbs, and who have something else to supply the wants created thereby. It is well known that the soul cannot correspond (or communicate) with those parts which are so supplied. It is the same in like manner, by taking away parts of the Letter of the Word."

"For the views here given," says Mr. Andrew Jukes in his Preface to '*Types of Genesis*,' speaking of the allegorical interpretation of Scripture, "there is the authority, not of one or two, but of many saints through many hundred years. And though these things were not first shewn me by the Fathers, but opened in solitary communings with the Word of God, yet I am thankful to see that I am in the same great circle and in the same spirit with the Church of other days. With them I see the Letter, and within it what I call an inward, an outward, and a dispensational application. They may call these moral, allegoric, and anagogic senses; but the thing meant remains the same, namely, a perception of the same work of God on different platforms. For they saw how God's work is reflected in many spheres, in the world within and without, and through extended ages; His work on earth shadowing forth still higher forms of the same work of the same unchanging Lord.* Thankful am I that brethren gone before had eyes to see and hearts to apprehend all this. For what I owe them, too, I am thankful; thus proving that the members of the body, from age to age, are not independent of one another. Besides, some will not take truth for authority, but want authority for truth. Such may hearken to the witness of saints of other days. The spiritual sense has indeed a witness far higher than holy men: its works will prove from whence it is: but as the Son of God received John's witness, so may the spiritual sense, while possessing a higher testimony, refer to the witness of the burning and shining lights of other days. I have, therefore, added a few quotations from the Fathers. Some may hearken to Augustine, who would not receive truth on its own authority. Such, having first heard the witness of men, may at length hear the witness of Truth itself. But such lights shew where those are who need them; for the light of the heavenly city and its inhabitants is the Lamb."

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* "Readers of the Fathers know that these different senses or applications of Scripture were generally received, and the principle of them apprehended by the Church in earlier days. What I have called the *inward* application, they call *moral* or *tropologic;* what I call the outward or historic spiritual fulfilment, they call *allegoric;* while the future or *dispensational* fulfilment, they call *anagogic*, from ἀνάγω, to lead upwards or onwards, according to the well-known lines,

"Litera gesta docet; quod credas, allegoria;
Moralis, quod agas; quò tendas anagogia."

"Any one who cares to see the ground or principle of this triple interpretation of Scripture, will find the question briefly but clearly stated by Thomas Aquinas; *Summ. Theol.* Pt. I., Qu. I., Art 10. Nicholas Lira also, in the Prologue to his Notes on the Bible, goes fully into this subject."—*Jukes.*

The Theosophic interpretation of sacred writings assumes a more occult meaning than is taught by the Letter. This method which was also that of the Egyptians and Hindus for the interpretation of their sacred books, became most important to the Mystic Hermeneutists of both the Old and New Testaments. For the former, the Alexandrian Jews and the Essenes, were great proficients in this science in ancient times. There also are works of Exegesis called *Medrash* (plural, *Medrashim*), which chiefly treat on the allegorical interpretation of certain parts of the Old Testament. As a magnificent production of the Theosophic interpretation, we point to the works of Philo Judæus; but Origen, St. Ambrose, St. Augustine, and other Fathers of the Christian Church have fully equalled, if not excelled, the profound insight of the Alexandrian Mystic.

Acting upon the principle that the divinely-inspired scribes of the Bible wrote more than they themselves intended, or were aware of, the theosophic interpretation was divided into four chief methods, indicated by the Hermeneutic verse, quoted by Mr. Jukes; wherein the Mystic or Theosophist proper, taught the highest or Divine subjects only, the Anagogic inculcating celestial or angelic things, the Moral or Tropological directing to ethical duties, as means for internal experiences, and the Typical pointing to externals. "The Letter treats of facts, which serve as allegory of what we are to believe; morals teach us how to act; and by anagogy we learn whereto it all tends." Thus, although, with all due deference to Mr. Jukes, we presume to differ slightly from his reading of this Hermeneutic verselet, we are agreed as to his method of scripture interpretation which he summarizes as follows:—

> "In the book of Genesis, as a base or ground for what is to follow, we first are shewn what springs from man; and all the different forms of life, which either by nature or grace can grow out of the root of old Adam. Then we see that, be it bad or good, which has come out of Adam, there must be redemption; so an elect people by the Blood of the Lamb are saved from Egypt. This is Exodus. After redemption is known, we come to the experience of the elect as needing access, and learning the way of it, to God the Redeemer in the sanctuary. This we get in Leviticus. Then in the wilderness of this world, as pilgrims from Egypt, the house of bondage, to the promised land beyond Jordan, the trials of the journey are learnt, from that land of wonders and man's wisdom, to the land flowing with milk and honey. This is the book of Numbers. Then comes the desire to exchange the wilderness for the better land, from entering which for a season after redemption is known, the elect yet shrink; answering to the desire of the elect at a certain stage to know the power of the resurrection, to live

even now as in the heavenly places. The rules and precepts which must be obeyed, if this is to be done, come next. Deuteronomy, a second giving of the law, a second cleansing, tells the way of progress. After which Canaan is indeed reached. We go over Jordan, we know practically the death of the flesh, and what it is to be circumcised, and to roll away the reproach of Egypt. We know now what it is to be risen with Christ, and to wrestle, not with flesh and blood, but with principalities and powers in heavenly places. This is Joshua. Then comes the failure of the elect in heavenly places; failure arising from making leagues with Canaanites instead of overcoming them. This is Judges. After which the different forms of rule, which the Church may know, pass in review in the books of Kings; from the first setting up of rule in Israel down to its extinction, when for their sin the rule of Babylon supersedes that of the elect. When this is known with all its shame, we see the remnants of the elect, each according to its measure, doing what may be done, if possible, to restore Israel; some, like Ezra, returning to build the temple, that is, to restore the forms of true worship; and some coming up, like Nehemia, to build the city, that is, to re-establish by Gentile permission a feeble imitation of the ancient polity; while a third remnant in Esther is seen in bonds, but faithful, providentially saved; though God's name (and this is characteristic of their state) never appears throughout the whole record.

"This subject would of itself fill a volume. I touch it here, not only to shew that each book has it own peculiar end, each being but the illustration of some one truth or fact, on which a revelation from God was needed by us; but to call attention also to their order and gradation, answering so exactly to the steps by which truth is ever apprehended by us in the world of thought within. In this light the position of Genesis is most suggestive. Its purport is to show what Adam is, and what can spring out of him. And just as in our souls the Spirit of God first comes to shew us ourselves, that so 'coming to ourselves,' like the Prodigal, we may then 'come to our Father' also; so does the Word open with the same, with Adam and his seed, that is the fruit of human nature. This, as it is the ground of all that follows, is not only an introduction: it is also an abridgment or summary of all books. For what is the series but a revelation of God, shewing His resources by the very wants and failures of the creature. Genesis, in shewing us Adam and his outcome, man by grace and nature, reveals in embryo the whole mystery of grace and nature in the creature. It is thus, an abstract of the Bible, with the long sum of Divine counsels worked out and expressed in God's algebra." *

It may be objected that the Theosophic interpretation excludes the belief in the verity of Bible history; but such is not necessarily the case. Sacred Scripture, in as far as it is the product of the One and Absolute Being, like Nature, is unique, and cannot be compared to anything but to itself; for there is nothing like it. The withdrawal of purposely obscuring old-time veils, and the consequent admission of more light into an old subject does not destroy, but revives and renews; and such new light and *re-velation*, or development, becomes absolutely necessary to keep pace with the expanding intellect of humanity and the progress of science. Thus, with the subject in question, we fear so little that popular inquiry will injure it, that in order to facilitate the study even to those who have not the advantage of acquaintance with the writings of the Fathers, we have, in treating the subject of the Theosophic Interpretation of the Bible, chiefly quoted so far from two modern works, namely, "Christ the Spirit" and "Types of Genesis," as we consider these the best for beginners in this study. More advanced students may undertake to read the commentaries of the Christian Fathers and Christian Mystics on various parts of Scripture.

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* Preface to *Types of Genesis.*

The opposition of the Theosophic to the merely literal interpretation became generally recognised, and several of the principal Church Fathers not only made no secret of it, but have declared that the Bible should be interpreted *only* Theosophically, considering the Sacred (Secret) Story, or History, as merely a groundwork for the representation of Theosophic Allegories. They knew of no other than the Theosophic interpretation, and therefore insisted that the Bible should be considered as a purely allegorical book.

Augustine, Ambrose, Origen, Jerome, Gregory, Maccarius, in brief, as before enumerated, the greatest and most venerated of the Church Fathers, were known Theosophists, and even the Ordinary Gloss accepted by the Church follows in many parts the Theosophic method for the interpretation of the Bible.

But let the Fathers themselves convince the reader.

Origen says: "The Scriptures are of little use to those who understand them as they are written. . . . the source of many evils lies in adhering to the carnal or external part of Scripture. . . . those who do so shall not obtain the Kingdom of God."

"Let us therefore," continues Origen, "seek for the Spirit, and the substantial fruits of the Word, which are hidden and mysterious."

And again the same authority declares of Scripture: "There are some things inserted as history which were never transacted, and which it is impossible should be transacted; and other things, again, that might possibly be done, but were not."

St. Hilary says: "There are many historical passages of the New Testament, that if they are taken literally, are contrary to sense and reason (!), and therefore there is of necessity a mystical interpretation."

St. Augustine says: "There are hidden mysteries in the works and miracles of our Saviour, which, if we incautiously and literally interpret, we shall run into errors, and commit grievous blunders."

St. Jerome, in his Epistle to Paulinos, declares still more emphatically: "Hearken, my brother, what path you should follow in Holy Scripture. All that we read in the divine books is lustrous, and radiant also externally; but still more sweet is the internal part. He who would eat the kernel must break the shell." "Open Thou mine eyes," says David, "that I may behold the wondrous things of Thy law (Psa. cxix. 18). If so great a prophet confesses the darkness of his ignorance, with what a dark night of ignorance, think you, must not we, who are children, yea, even babes, be surrounded? *This veil lies not only upon the face of Moses, but also upon the Evangelists and Apostles.* To the people our Saviour spoke in parables; and to prove that His words had an occult meaning, He said: "He that hath ears to hear let him hear." And there were some things which He could only at that time make known to three, even of His own Apostles, viz.: to Peter, James, and John, and to these only by *taking them up to a high place, or mountain* (*i.e.*, leading them up to a *state*, not a *place*, of Spiritual elevation). If that which is written is not explained by Him who has "the Key of David, that openeth, and no man shutteth, and shutteth, and no man openeth," then it will not be opened by any one else; and *only* those will see to whom it is given to see and understand.

We shall further behold the throughout mystic intention of the Fathers in their interpretation of the Bible when we search to ascertain in what sense the various subjects set forth in Scripture were by them understood; and we shall always find that the most celebrated of the Fathers invariably preferred the allegorical to the historical interpretation. The latter being merely considered as a vehicle for conveyance of mystic ideas and truths.

The following texts, given in the original Latin, with a special English translation, will still more fully satisfy the inquiring Christian mind, and illustrate the Theosophic Interpretation of the Bible, which the Christian Fathers adhered to.

On the Creation St. Augustine writes as follows:—

"Cum dicitur, '*In principio fecit Deus*,' commemoratio Filii fit, quia principium est; sed cum dicitur, '*Dixit Deus fiat*,' commemoratio, quia verbum est. Per principium, insinuat exordium creaturæ, existentis ab illo: per verbum, perfectionem creaturæ ab illo ad ipsum revocatæ, ut formaretur

"When it is said, '*In the beginning God made*,' mention is made of the Son, because He is the beginning; but when it is said, '*God said, "Let there be*,"' there is mention [also of Him], because He is the Word.* By the beginning means the commencement of the creation existing from Him; by the inhærendo Creatori"—*Aug. de Gen. ad lit.*—Lib. I., ch. 4.

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* Christ is the *Archè*, the first begotten or Beginning of the Creation of God. "These things saith the Amen, the faithful and true witness, the beginning of the Creation of God;" (Rev. iii. 14.)

word the perfection of the creature recalled by Him to Himself, that it might be formed by cleaving to the Creator."

Had he written with more knowledge, or, shall we say, with more frankness, he would have explained that *the* "*In principio,*" was *in* "*the principle*" (in other words, in the feminine principle, *i.e.*, the Eternal Mother); and that, the *Word*, as it requires *Voice* for expression, is both Son and Daughter, or dual.*

"Terra nostra antequam acciperet formam doctrinæ invisibilis erat et incomposita, et ignorantiæ tenebris tegebamur. Sed quia spiritus tuus ferebatur super aquam, non reliquit miseriam nostram misericordia tua, et dixisti, 'Fiat lux,' penitentiam agite, appropinquavit enim regnum cœlorum."—*Aug. Conf.*—Lib. XIII., ch. 12.

"Our earth (earthly part), before it received the form of the doctrine, was invisible and uncompounded, and we were covered with the darkness of ignorance. But because Thy Spirit was borne upon the water, Thy mercy did not leave our misery, and Thou saidst: 'Let there be light,' repent ye, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Augustine thus briefly sums up the inward fulfilment of the work of the first three days:—

"Habet etiam unusquisque nostrûm in bonis operibus et rectâ vitâ tanquam distinctos istos sex dies, post quos debet quietem sperare. Primo die lucem fidei, quando prius invisibilibus credit, propter quam

"Every one of us also has in His good works and upright life, as it were, those six divided days, after which he shall hope for peace. On the first day, the light of faith, when he first believes in the

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* The Jewish Targums often treat of a מימראיי *Mimra-Jod-Heva*, Word (Logos), also spoken of as *The Bath-Kol or daughter of Voice*, or daughter of the Logos. *Light* is termed by the Kabbalists, Sephira, or the Divine *Intelligence*, the Mother of all the Sephiroth, while the *Concealed Wisdom* is the Father. Light is the first begotten, and Light is Life, the *Anima Mundi*, or electricity pervading the Universe.

fidem Dominus visibiliter apparere dignatus est. Secundo die tanquam firmamentum disciplinæ, quo discernit inter carnalia et spiritalia, sicut inter aquas inferiores et superiores. Tertio die, quo mentem suam ad ferendos bonorum operum fructus, a labe et fluctibus tentationum carnalium tanquam aridam terram a perturbationibus maris secernit, ut jam possit dicere, mente servio legi Dei, carne autem legi peccati."—*De Gen. contra Manich.*—Lib. I., ch. 25 § 43.

invisible, on account of which faith the Lord vouchsafed to appear [to him] visibly. On the second day, as it were, the firmament of discipline, when he made a division between the carnal and the spiritual, as the waters were divided between the lower and the upper. On the third day, when his mind is brought to bear the fruit of good works, and is freed from the stain and waves of carnal temptation, he distinguishes, as it were, the dry land from the perturbations of the sea, and can say: In mind I obey the law of God, as in flesh I obeyed the law of sin."

Speaking of the fourth day, Augustine — always following the same rule of interpretation, and explaining the account of Creation esoterically, as the progressive development of Spiritual *humanity*, and not exoterically as Science has endeavoured to do, as if it treated of the material earth, or *humus*, of which the outer body of humanity is formed—goes on to say:—

"Æterno consilio propriis temporibus bona cœlestia das super terram. Quoniam alii datur per Spiritum sermo sapientiæ tanquam luminare majus, propter eos qui perspicuæ veritatis luce delectantur tanquam in principio diei; alii autem sermo scientiæ secundum eumdem Spiritum, tanquam luminare minus; alii fides, alii donatio curationum, alii prophetia, alii dijudicatio spirituum, alteri genera lingua-

"By an eternal council Thou dost give in their proper seasons heavenly blessings upon earth. For to one is given by the Spirit the word of wisdom to shine, as it were, the greater light, for the sake of those who take delight in the light of evident truth, as it were, for the rule of the day; but to another the word of wisdom, of the same Spirit, to shine, as it were, as the lesser light; to another faith; to another the

rum; et hæc omnia tanquam stellæ. Omnia enim hæc operatur unus atque idem Spiritus, faciens, apparere sidera in manifestatione ad utilitatem. Sermo autem scientiæ, quâ continentur omnia sacramenta, quæ variantur temporibus tanquam luna, et ceteræ notitiæ donorum, quæ deinceps tanquam stellæ commemorata sunt, quantum differunt ab illo candore sapientiæ, quo gaudet præidctus dies, tantum in principio noctis," &c.—*Confess,*—Lib. XIII., ch. 18 § 23.

gift of healing; to another prophecy; to another the discerning of spirits; to another different kinds of languages; and all these are, as it were, stars. For all these are, and the same Spirit works, making the stars appear manifestly for utility. But the word of wisdom, in which are contained all the sacraments, that are varied in time, as [is] the moon, and the other communication of gifts, which are successively reckoned up, as it were, as stars, inasmuch as they come short of that brightness of wisdom, in which the before mentioned sun rejoices [and] are to rule the night."

Concerning the fifth day, Augustine explains the living creatures to be *emotions;* and to this day, wherever the primitive language of symbol yet remains, the passions are still characterised by the names of different birds and beasts. Indeed, we constantly say ourselves that some one is as brave as a lion, as fierce as a tiger, as cunning as a fox, as gentle as a lamb, as tender as a dove, or as soaring as an eagle, &c., &c.

"Pisces maris et volatilia cœli et repentes omnes quæ repunt super terram. . . . recté intelligantur spiritualiter ut omnes affectiones et motus animi, quos habemus istis animalibus similes."—*De Gen. c. Manich.*—Lib. I., ch. 20.

"The fishes of the sea, and the birds of heaven, and all creeping things that creep upon the earth . . . are rightly understood, spiritually, as all the affections and emotions of the soul, which we have like those animals."

Further on, in the same book, ch. 25, he says:—

"Fortior effectus incipit quinto die operari. . . . pro-

"The stronger effect begins to operate on the fifth day ducere animarum vivarum reptilia, id est opera quæ prosint animis vivis, et cetos magnos, id est fortissimas actiones, quibus fluctus sæculi dirumpuntur, et volatilia cœli, id est voces cœlestia prædicantes."—See also *Confession.*—Lib. V., ch. 3, § 4.

. . . . to produce reptiles or living animals, that is, works which profit souls alive; and great whales, that is, the strongest actions which the waves of ages dash to pieces; and the birds of heaven, that is, celestial voices speaking in praise of (the Creator)."

Thus leading him to the dawn of the sixth day, on which—having outgrown the beast, man is *made* in the image of God—"In His own image, in the image of God created He him; male and female created He them, and God blessed them and said, Be fruitful and multiply, and replenish the earth and subdue it, and have dominion over every living thing," etc., etc.;* which means, that man having attained to the sixth day or state, and outgrown and subdued the animal, or earthly soul, attains to the Spiritual soul and becomes a Son of God. Concerning "Eden," *i.e.*, garden of *delight*, which word the LXX translates into τρυφῆς, and the Vulgate renders by voluptatis.

Augustine writes as follows:—

"Intelligamus nostra gaudia spiritalia significare omne lignum, formosum ad aspectum intelligentiæ, et bonum ad escam quæ non corrumpitur, quâ beatæ animæ pascuntur; 'ad Orientem,' 'lucem sapientiæ;'

"Let us understand that our spiritual joys mean every tree (that is) beautiful to the view of intelligence, and good for food that is not corrupted, that blessed souls feed upon: 'to the East,' 'the light of Wisdom';

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* Be it observed that this command is recorded in the First Chapter of Genesis, on the sixth day, therefore before the Separation, and when, as we read in the NUCTAMERON of the Mischna, or Ancient Talmud of the Jews, "Every fish, fowl, plant, beast, and man, was Androgyne at the first hour" (See "*Occult Texts*" on the Sephiroth).

'in Eden,' id est, in deliciis immortalibus et intelligilibus. Nam deliciæ, vel voluptas, vel epulum hoc verbo significari dicitur, si ex Hebræo in Latinum vertitur."—*De Gen. c. Manich.*"—Lib., II., ch. 9, § 12.

'in Eden,' that is, in delights immortal and intelligible. For it is said, that delights, or pleasure, or a feast, are signified by this word, if it is translated from Hebrew into Latin," etc.

The Fall is thus characteristically treated:—

"Etiam nunc in unoquoque nostrûm nihil aliud agitur, cum ad peccatum quisque delabitur, quam tunc actum est in illis tribus, serpente, mulier, et viro."—*De Gen. c. Manich.*—Lib. II., ch. 14, § 21.

"So now in every one of us nothing else is done, when any one falls into sin, than was then done in those three, the serpent, the woman, and the man."

Augustine distinguishes between Adam as the first or earthly man, and the latter or spiritual man he is destined to become through re-generation, or being born of the divine spirit, as man, and as the son of man, for the new man is truly the son of the old man in us.

"Omnis filius hominis homo: non omnis homo filius hominis possit intelligi. Adam quippe homo, sed non filius hominis. Quapropter hinc jam licet adtendere atque discernere, quid hoc in loco inter hominem et filium hominis distet: ut qui portant imaginem terreni hominis, qui non est filius hominis, hominis nomine significentur; qui autem portant imaginem cœlestis hominis, filii hominum potius appellentur. Ille enim et vetus homo dicitur; iste autem novus. Sed novus ex vetere nascitur, quoniam spiritalis regeneratio mutatione vitæ terrenæ inchoatur, ed ideo iste

"Every son of man is a man: every man cannot be taken to be a son of man. Adam, for example, was a man, but not the son of a man. Wherefore we may from this consider and distinguish in this place, what is the difference between a man and the son of a man, that they who bear the image of the earthly man, who is not a son of man, should be signified by the name of man; but they who bear the image of the heavenly man, should rather be called the sons of men. For the former again is called the old old man; but the latter the new. But the new man filius hominis nuncupatur."—*Enar. in Psal.*—VIII. § 10.

is born of the old, because spiritual regeneration begins from the change of the earthly life; and therefore the latter is called the son of man."

Of Cain and Abel:—

"Illud igitur quod inter Cain et Abel exortum est, inter duas civitates, Dei et hominum, inimicitias demonstravit. Et in uno quippe homine caro concupiscit adversus spiritum, et spiritus adversus carnem."—*Aug. de Civitat.*—Lib. XV., ch. 5.

"That therefore which arose between Cain and Abel, showed the enmities between the two Cities, God and Man. And in one man, for example, the flesh has a desire for a thing against the spirit, and the spirit against the flesh," etc.

Origen interprets the account of Creation as follows:—

"Si enim istas aquas quæ sunt sub cœlo non separavimus a nobis, id est peccata et vitia corporis nostri, arida nostra non poterit apparere, nec habere fiduciam procedendi ad lucem. . . . Omnis enim qui malè agit odit lucem, ed non venit ad lucem, ut non manifestarentur opera ejus: quæ utique fiducia non aliter dabitur, nisi velut aquas abjiciamus a nobis."—*Hom. I. in Gen.*

"For if we have not separated the waters that are under the heaven from ourselves, that is, the sins and vices of our body, our dry [land] would not appear, and we have the confidence of proceeding to the light. . . . For every one who does badly hates the light, and does not come to the light, so that its works are not manifested; which confidence, surely, will not be otherwise given, unless, as it were, we cast away the waters from us."

"Sicut in firmamento isto, quod jam cœlum fuerat appellatum jubet Deus fieri luminaria, ita et in nobis fieri potest. Si studeamus vocari et effici cœlum, lumenaria habebimus in nobis, quæ illuminent nos, Christum et ecclesiam ejus. . . . quæ sunt autem in nobis stellæ, id est in cordis nostri cœlo? Moyses stella est in nobis quæ lucet. et Esaias, et Daniel," etc.—*Idem.*

"As in the firmament, which was called the heaven, God commands there should be lights; so too there can be lights in us. If we desire to be called and to form a heaven, we have lights in ourselves, which illuminate us, Christ and His Church. But what are the stars in us, that is, in the heaven of our heart? Moses is a star which shines in us, and Isaiah and Daniel," etc.

"Secundum literam jussu Dei producuntur ab aquis repentia et volatilia. Videamus quomodo secundum nostrum firmamentum cœli, id est mentis nostræ vel cordis soliditatem, hæc eadem fiant. Arbitror quia si mens nostra illuminata fuerit a nostro sole Christo, jubetur postmodum ex his quæ in eâ sunt aquis producere repentia et volatilia, id est cogitationes bonas. . . . Si sit in nobis sensus ut etiam si duo minuta habeamus, hæc ipsa pro misericordiâ offeramus in dona Dei, iste sensus avis est, nihil terrenis cogitans. . . Si ascendat nobis sensus et cogitatio talis, ut usque ad mortem pro veritate certemus, avis hæc, a terrenis ad superna conscendens. Similiter etiam de cæteris," etc.—*Idem.*

"According to the letter [of Scripture] by the command of God, things that creep and fly are produced from the waters. Let us see how, according to our firmament of heaven, that is, the solidity of our mind and heart, this is done. I think that because our mind is illuminated by our sun Christ; it is commanded afterwards to produce what creep and fly, that is, good thoughts from the waters that are in it. . . . If there be feeling in us, that although we have two small [gifts], we offer these for mercy as gifts to God, the feeling is a bird, thinking nothing of the earthly. . . If such a feeling and thought in us ascends, so that even unto death we struggle for truth, here is a bird ascending from earth to heaven.* So too of others," etc.

"Si quis est, qui crescentibus malis, et inundantibus vitiis, convertere se potest a rebus fluxis et pereuntibus, et audire verba Dei, ac præcepta cœlestia, hic intra cor suum arcam salutis ædificat, et bibliothecam (ut ita dicam) intra se divini consecrat verbi. . . Munda quidem animalia, memoria intellectus, examinatio, etc., immunda, ira, et concupiscentia."—*Hom. II. in Gen.*

"If there is any who, in increasing evils and overflowing vices, can turn from current and perishing things, and hear the words of God, and heavenly commandments, he builds the ark of salvation within his heart, and makes a sacred library (as I may so say) within himself of the Divine word. . . . The clean animals are memory, intellect, examination, etc.; the unclean, anger and concupiscence," etc.

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* We learn from the Science of Correspondences that Birds and winged things, according to their species, correspond to the intellectual things of each mind. This is self-evident, as the intellectual soars—having Spiritual Wings.

In this wise does also Gregory the Great interpret the Creation mystically:

"Quid est mare, nisi cor nostrum, furore turbidum, rixis amarum, elatione superbiæ tumidum, fraude malitiæ obscurum; quod mare, quantum sæviat, attendit quis quis in se occultas cogitationum, tentationes intelligit. Ecce enim jam perversali relinquimus, jam desideriis rectis inhæremus, jam prava opera foris abscindimus; sed tamen latenter intus eâ, cum quâ huc venimus, vitæ veteris procellâ fatigamur."—*Moral. in Job.*—Lib. XXVIII., ch. 19, § .3.

"What is the sea unless it be our heart, turbid with fury, bitter from strife, swollen with the elation of pride, and darkened with the vice of malice; the sea, which, when it greatly rages causes every one to fix his attention upon himself and understand the hidden temptations of his thoughts. For lo! we relinquish sin, we cling to righteous desires, and drive away from us wicked deeds; but, yet privately within we are tost about by the storm of the old life with which we have come here."

"Conclusit ostiis mare; quia nisi ab ipso cogitationis primordio cordis fluctus gratia divina retineret, tentationum procellis mare sæviens terram proculdubio humanæ mentis obruisset: ut salsis fluctibus perfusa aresceret, id est, perniciosis carnis, voluptatibus delectata deperiret. Solus ergo Dominus ostiis mare concludit, qui pravis motibus cordis claustra inspirata formidinis objicit. Quia verò ea quæ cernimus, sequi prohibémur, quia a corporearum rerum delectatione retundimur: libet etiam ad invisibilia oculos mentis attollere," etc.

"He that shut up the sea with gates; because unless from the very beginning of thought, the divine grace had restrained the waves of the heart, a sea raging with the storms of temptations would, beyond all doubt, have overwhelmed the land of the human mind, that covered with salt waves, it would become dried up, that is, would perish, delighted with the pernicious pleasure of the flesh. Therefore, the only Lord shut up the sea with gates [even as he] sets up against the wicked emotions of the heart, the inspired gates of fear. Because in truth we are prohibited from following the things we see, because we are kept off from the delight of corporeal things, so it pleases us to lift up to the invisible the eyes of the mind," etc.

The *Ordinary Gloss*, which is but a summing up of the comments of the Fathers, interprets the generation from Adam to Noah mystically, as follows:—

"Interpretatio nominum hujus generationis mysterium signat. Adam interpretatur *homo* vel rubra terra; Seth, *positio* vel resurrectio; Enos, *homo;* Cainan, *lamentatio;* Mahalalel, *laudans Deum;* Jared, *roboratus;* Enoch, *dedicatio;* Mathusalem, *mortis emissio;* Lamech, *humiliatus;* Noe, *requies.* Procedens ergo, *homo* de terrâ, *resurgens* a peccatis, erit *homo deflens* peccata pristina, et *invocans Deum;* sicque laudans Deum, *roboratus* Spiritu Dei, dedicatur in vitam æternam; Atque *victor mortis,* Deo *subjectus,* requiem possidet sempiternam, quam significat Noe, qui *requies* interpretatur. Et notandum quia in generatione Seth nulla fœmina ponitur nominatim, sicut in generatione Cain: justorum enim est omnia viriliter agere, nihil fœmineun, nihil fragile usurpare. Procedit etiam hæc generatio per denarium usque ad Noe, in quo præceptorum significatur impletio, sicut per undenarium in generatione Cain transgressio. In generatione injustorum primus Enoch ponitur, qui *dedicatio* interpretatur, quia reprobi in præsente vitâ spei suæ radicem figunt. In generatione justorum Enoch ab Adam septimus ponitur, quia hic manentem civitatem non quærunt, sed expectationem usque in finem temporis extendunt, quod septenariâ revolutione terminatur, cùm æternitas octava succes-

"The interpretation of the names of this generation points out a mystery. Adam is interpreted *man* or *red earth;* Seth, *placing* or resurrection; Enos, *man*; Cainan, *lamentation:* Mahalalel, *praising God;* Jared, justified; Enoch, *dedication;* Methusalem, *a hurling away of death;* Lamech, *humiliated;* Noe, *rest.* Man, therefore, coming from *earth* (and) *rising* from sin, and *calling upon* God, and so praising God and *fortified* by the spirit of God is *dedicated* to eternal life. But the *conqueror of death,* subjected to God, becomes the possessor of everlasting life, which Noe signifies, which is interpreted *rest.* And it is to be observed that in the Seth generation no woman is mentioned by name, as in the Cain generation; for it is the way of the righteous to do everything in a masculine manner, and practise nothing that is feminine, nothing that is frail. This generation, too, progresses by ten down to Noe, in which is signified the number of the commandments, as the progression is by eleven in the Cain generation. In the generation of the unrighteous, Enoch is placed first, who is interpreted *dedication,* because the bad fix the root of their hope in the present life. In the generation of the righteous, Enoch is placed seventh from Adam, because they do not seek to

serit; unde iste Enoch, qui ponitur septimus, translatus est," etc.	gain their city remaining here, but extend their hope even to the end of time, which is terminated by the seventh revelation, when eternity will succeed as the eight, whence Enoch, who is placed seventh, was taken up (to heaven)," etc.

Concerning Noah or the Regeneration, Ambrose, throughout his whole comment, *De Noe et Arcâ*, gives the esoteric, or inward, sense of the history of the Deluge, that has so perplexed men of material science to explain geographically, or to account for historically, and says:—

"Diluvii species typus est purgationis animæ nostræ. . . ."	"The Deluge is a type of the cleansing of our soul. . . ."
(Noah:) "Quis est 'justus' in nobis, nisi mentis vigor, qui intra istam arcam inclusit omne animantium genus. . . . . omnes irrationabiles sensus," &c.	(Noah:) "What is righteousness in us but strength of mind, which shuts up every kind of animals within that ark. . . . all irrational feelings?" &c.
(Diluvium est:) "Ebulliunt omnes fontes cupiditatum. . . . omnibus pariter ingruentibus passionibus."	(The Flood:) "All the fountains of the desires boisterously burst forth. . . . All the passions, in an equal degree, violently rushing out. . . ."
(Cessatio:). . . . "Affluentia erroris cessat."	(Its cessation:). . . . "The flowing out of error is at an end."
(Corvus est:) "Impudentia et malitia quæ mortuis pascitur, sicut corvus."	(The raven:) "Impudence and malice, that feeds upon the (spiritually) dead, like the raven."
(Columba est:) "Simplicitas."	(The dove is:) "Simplicity."
(Corvus:) "Malitia, diluvium amat."	(The raven:) "Malice, that loves the Deluge."
(Columba:) "Tardè enim inter sæcularium fluctus cupidi-	(The dove will not stay abroad while the flood re-

tatum portum solet invenire simplicitas."	mains:) "For simplicity in the midst of the waves of wordly desires is wont tardily to find the door." *

Concerning Noah's sons, Ambrose says:—

"Huic verò tres filii nati, Sem, Cham, Japhet, quæ nomina significant bonum, et malum, et indifferens; ut et naturæ gratiâ bonitatem habuisse, et malorum tentamenta ei nequaquam defuisse, et indifferntibus, hoc est, velut supellectili virtutum abundâsse videatur."	"But he has three sons—Sem, Cham, and Japhet—whose names mean good, bad, and indifferent, as (human) nature seems to have had goodness, not to have been without the temptations of evil, and to have abounded in the indifferent, that is, as it were, the ornament of the virtues."
"Sunt enim cogitationes mentis contrariæ. . . . bonitas et malitia mentis."	"But the mind has contrary opinions. . . . (Shem and Ham are) the goodness and badness of the mind."
"Ceterium non tam hic homines quam mores comprehenduntur. . . . nam Cham calor, Chanaan commotio est."	"But here men are not so much comprised as qualities; for Cham is heat, and Chanaan motion."

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* "Man as the Microcosm, is the *Ark* containing all animate existence in pairs—love and hate, joy and sorrow, hope and fear, &c.—symbolized by animals, as some men are said to have the disposition of the lion; others that of the wolf; others that of the fox, the eagle, the crow, the dove, the lamb, &c. The Ark floats helplessly in nature, at the mercy of its winds and waves until it reaches the mount, or Truth of God, &c. But it is the just man that is preserved, with all the animals subordinated within him. The Truth of nature represented in this fiction, which, no doubt, owes its origin to some ancient secret society, recommended it to other similar societies, in which it was commemorated by imposing ceremonies, accounting for many mysterious allusions in ancient writings, which are referred by Faber to what he calls *Arkite* ceremonies. The same 'Legend' teaches the immortality of the soul, or the preservation of the 'Just,' in death symbolized by the Flood."—*Christ the Spirit*, I., p. 362.

"Interior significatio demonstrat justum virum tanquam arborem fructuosam, internecatis quæ escam ejus solebant arrodere, coartare processus ramorum, velut exsortem, irrationabilium passionum, solum remansisse cum suis. 'Sui' autem sunt animi disceptationes."

"'The inward sense means the righteous man' (he is speaking of Noah when come forth out of the Ark), freed, as it were, from the unreasonable passions, to have been left alone with his sons, as the fruit tree (insects), having killed its fruits they were accustomed to nibble at, and to shorten the length of its boughs. But his sons are the discussions of his mind."

Concerning the Tower of Babel (or self-elevation) St. Augustine expresses himself as follows:—

"Quid sibi vult, '*Venite et descendentes confundamus*' (quod intelligitur angelis dictum), nisi quia per angelos descendebat, qui in angelis descendentibus erat. Et bene non ait, Venite, et descendentes confundite; sed '*Confundamus ibi linguam eorum*'; ostendens ita se operari per ministros suos, &c."—*De Civit.*—Lib. XVI., ch. 5.

"That which he wishes for himself, '*Come, and descending, let us confound*' (which is understood as said to the angels), because He descended through the angels, who was in the descending angels. He does not say in effect: 'Come, and descending, confound,' but, 'Let us confound there their language,' thus showing that He worked through His servants, &c." *

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* "Here Man is working to ascend up to heaven. Self-elevation is the aim; self-energy the means: it is but consistent that self-glory, 'to make us a name,' should be the motive; and withal (let not this be forgotten), the reason assigned seemed good;—they wished for unity; their fear was 'lest they should be scattered'; therefore they built their high tower. We know too well how others also have builded, with the self-same aim, professing, and perhaps really seeking, Catholic unity; and the result has only been greater scattering among those who were to be united. But when man builds for self-glory, and with imitations of the true instead of the true, the end may surely be foretold."—Jukes, *Types of Genesis*, p. 153.

The *Patriarchs* are favourite types of Theosophic interpretation with Esoteric Christian Bible-Hermeneutists.

The *Gloss*, in the *Catena Aurea*, on the Genealogy of Christ in St. Matthew—while explaining Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as figuring certain successive forms of life in man, which end after many confusions in Christ (the image of God wrought in us), interprets Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, as the lives of faith, hope, and charity, respectively. The passage is as follows:—

"Moraliter autem Abraham nobis virtutem fidei per exempla Christi significat, cùm de eo legatur, 'Abraham credidit Deo, et reputatum ess ei ad Justitiam.' Isaac significat spem, quia interpretatur *risus;* fuit enim, gaudium parentum. Spes vero similiter est gaudium nostrum, dum æterna bona sperare facit, et de eis gaudere. Abraham ergo genuit Isaac, quia fides generat spem. Jacob autem significat charitatem. Charitas enim amplectitur duas vitas, activam per dilectionem proximi, contemplativam per dilectionem Dei; activa per Liam, contemplativa per Rachel, significatur. Lia enim *laborans* interpretatur, quia activa, in labore est: Rachel *visum principium*, quia per contemplativam principium, id est Deus, vid etur."

"Now, morally, Abraham means to us the virtue of faith through the examples of Christ, when it is said of him: 'Abraham believed in God, and it was counted to him for righteousness.' Isaac means hope, because it is interpreted *laughter:* for he was the joy of his parents. But hope is in like manner a joy, when it makes us hope for eternal good, and rejoice in it. Abraham, therefore, begot Isaac, because faith begets hope. But Jacob means charity. For charity enchains two lives, the active through love of [our] neighbour, and the contemplative through love of God; the active is signified through Leah, and the contemplative through Rachel. For Leah is interpreted *labouring*, because the active is in labour; Rachel, *the beginning seen*, because, through contemplation the beginning, that is, God, is seen."

"Our new and divine Genesis opens in this wise: 'The book of the generation of Jesus Christ.' His coming is much more than our new beginning; it is strictly our first beginning. It unites therefore heaven and earth, angels and men, in one endless human joy.

"It has pleased God to hear most emphatic testimony that Holy Jesus was not simply born *for* our sinful race, but *of* the race. Matthew gives the line of His descent from Abraham, and Luke the whole line from Adam. The Divine Seed of the woman has come down to fallen humanity *through the bosom of fallen humanity.* The Son of Mary comes through Adam, through Seth, through Noah, through Abraham, through David and so on. Had he not been incorporate in the race from the beginning, there would be no foundation of truth in our genealogies. Quite naturally, according to his word, he sat at meat with publicans and sinners; for throughout our whole history he had been with, and *in*, his sinful children.

"Jacob begat twelve sons, the best natured of whom was Joseph the son of his old age; but Jesus came not by Joseph's line. Judah was a far grosser nature—unchastity being specially recorded against him. Jesus comes down to us through this man. From Judah the Holy germ flows through Tamar, his daughter-in-law Rahab also is expressly mentioned as a channel. Bathsheba is in the direct line. The Moabites are the children of Lot, by his own daughter, and Ruth, who is a mother in 'the book of the generation of Jesus,' is a Moabitess. Is it not very remarkable that in a genealogy which, in general, makes no mention of women, the Evangelist should be so careful to mention the names of certain disreputable women? It is characteristic of the boldness of inspiration that it never hesitates to expose disgraceful facts. . . . . God wishes us to note that the flesh of Jesus was not derived from immaculate parentage. He took our shame as well as our nature. . . . . Let no one think that these things are recorded that we may think less of sin and the uncleanness of the flesh. . . . . All the way along from Adam to Mary, 'he was numbered with the transgressors,' and clothed with their sins. . . . . In all their chastisements he was chastised. He was nigh unto them prompting them to prayer and repentance. He was the pleading 'Spirit of Life' in their mouth and in their heart that they might be saved."—Morgenröthe, pp. 18, 19, by John Pulsford.

St. Augustine says:—

"Ægyptus autem, quoniam interpretatur *affligens* vel *com-*	"But Egypt, because it is interpreted afflicting, or sup-

primens, sæpe in imagine ponitur hujus sæculi, a quo spiritaliter recendendum est ne simus jugum ducentes cum infidelibus."—*Enar.* in Psalm cxiii. (*E. V.* II., 4), § 3.

pressing, is often put in the idea of this age, in which there is a departure from spiritual matters, for our not being led under the yoke with the unfaithful."

"Abram, the spirit of faith, tried by the difficulties on the ground of promise, goes down to seek rest in Egypt, that is, in the ground of sense, rightly called *straitness;* . . . here comes the elect, thinking to find some refuge; and here Sarah is at once denied with an equivocation. Women, in this inward view, are certain affections. Sarah is the affection or principle of spiritual truth. In Egypt Sarah is denied: those affections which the spirit of faith ought to defend and cherish most carefully (for from them must spring the promised fruit) are brought into danger of defilement from earthly things. . . . So does sense now seek to enter into the things of faith; and could it do so it would at once violate them."—Jukes, *Types of Genesis*, p. 177.

We are told that "the men in the Bible always represent certain minds: and their wives, the affections, more vaguely the principles with which they are allied; for our principles are what our affections are. Thus, new principles, or rather fresh forms embodying the same principles, are taken into union by the various forms of the Elect Spirit at the successive stages of its development. The form of truth answers to the Spirit which receives it; and thus, truth substantially the same, continually puts on fresh appearances. Truth cannot differ from itself; but as the same Elect Spirit at different stages takes different forms, so the truth which is embraced by that Elect Spirit at different stages is seen in different forms also. It dies out in one form and lives in another, and yet all the forms may live to God. For as He is the God of Abraham, and Isaac, and Jacob, and not the God of the dead, but of the living, so is He the God of Sarah, and Rebekah, and Rachel also, for all in Spirit live to Him. Sarah's outward form may die, and as an outward form the truth she figures may die also; but death only gives to the Spirit greater liberty, so that her death sets forth the greater spiritualizing, even through the destruction of its outward form of that truth or affection which she represents. And then another form of truth is found, suited to the advancing development of the Elect Spirit, that is, Isaac, and thus the Elect who as the Spirit of faith is joined to truth under the Sarah form, when Abraham is old, when faith is matured, at the next stage as the spirit of sonship is united to Rebekah, not another truth, but another form of it."—*Idem.*

In Bossuet's "Discourse on the Universal History" occurs the following remarkable passage, which shows that the celebrated Bishop of Meaux had deeply penetrated into the spirit of the Holy Scriptures:—

"L'Egypte d'où il faut sortir, le desert où il faut passer, la Babylone dont il faut rompre les prisons, pour entrer ou pour retourner dans notre patrie, c'est le monde avec ses plaisirs et ses vanités: c'est là que nous sommes vraiment captifs et errants, seduits par le péché et ses convoitises; il nous faut secouer ce jong pour trouver dans Jerusalem, et dans la cité de notre Dieu, la liberté véritable, et un Sanctuaire non fait de la main d'homme, où la Gloire du Dieu d'Israel nous apparoisse."

"The Egypt it is needful to come out of, the wilderness which must be gone through, the prisons of the Babylon, which it is indispensable to break open, in order to enter or return into our country, is the world with its pleasures and vanities: it is therein that we are indeed captive and wandering, seduced by sin and its irregular desires; we must shake off that yoke to find in Jerusalem, and in the City of our God, the true freedom, and a Sanctuary not made by the hand of man, wherein the Glory of the God of Israel appears to us."

Had Bossuet fully explained the hint which he has given of his way of understanding Holy Scripture, it would have been easy for so able a writer to demonstrate, like another Origen, that it was not correct in any wise to take in a literal sense, the Creation, the Paradise, the Fall, the Deluge, the Egypt, the Wilderness, the Babylon, and the Jerusalem of the Bible. But it is possible he may have considered the Church in his time was not yet prepared to receive so great a revelation, which would work a change in her religious tenets. Is she now in a more favourable condition for it?

The following comments on passages in the life of Abraham are also full of mystic suggestiveness:—

"Merito quæritur, cur Abraham nec die quo natus est ei filius, nec die quo circumcisus est, sed die quod ablactus est, epulum fecerit. Quod nisi ad aliquem spiritalem significationem referatur, nulla solutio quæstionis est, tunc scilicet esse debere magnum gaudium spiritalis ætatis, quando fuerit factus homo novus spiritalis, id est non talis qualibus dicit Apostolus, Lac vobis potum dedi."—*Augustin Quæst. in Gen.*—Lib. I., n. 50.

"It is justly asked, why Abraham, neither on the day when his son was born, nor on that when he was circumcised, but on the day when he was weaned, made a feast for him. But, unless it refers to some spiritual signification, there is no answering the question. It must then, forsooth, be the great joy of the spiritual age, when the new spiritual man was fully formed, that is, when he was no longer such as those of whom the Apostle speaks: I gave milk to you as drink."

"Duo sunt ergo filii Abrahæ, unuis de ancillâ, et unus de liberâ; uterque tamen filius Abrahæ, licet non uterque de liberâ. . . Omnes ergo quidem qui per fidem veniunt ad agnitionem Dei possunt, filii Abrahæ dici. Sed in his sunt aliqui pro charitate adhærentes Deo, alii pro metu et timore futuri judicii. . . Super his cum depelluntur a lacte fit convivium magnum: super illis autem non potest exhiberi convivium nec haberis lætitia. . . Dat ancillæ utrem aquæ, non habebat enim puteum aquæ vivæ, nec poterat puer haurire de puteo aquam. Isaac habebat puteos. . . Ismael autem de utre bibit aquam. . . . Uter legis est litera, de quâ

"Abraham had two sons, one by a slave, and the other by a free woman; yet, both are the sons of Abraham, though both are not by the free woman. All, therefore, who come by faith to a knowledge of God, can be called the sons of Abraham. But among these there are some who cleave to God through love, and others through trembling and fear of future judgment. . . Over the latter, when they have left off suckling, there can be a great feast; but over the former there can neither be a feast given, nor joy displayed. . . . He gives to the slave the leather bottle of water, for he had not for her the well of living water; nor could her carnalis populus bibit. . . . bibit de puteis qui profundiora quæque haurit," &c.—*Origen, Hom. VII. in Gen.*

child draw water from the well. Isaac had wells. . . . But Ishmael drank water from a leather bottle. . . . The leather bottle is the letter of the law, from which worldly people drink. . . . He drinks from wells who draws from deeper sources," etc.

Abram's conflict to deliver Lot is interpreted as the struggle of the spirit of faith to save the outward man, which yet is dear to it. The Shem and Ham within us are certain minds growing out of the regenerate soul. Ham is the darkened, rebellious mind, from which gigantic evils, like the Rephaim (Giants), spring. These are put down by Shem's seed, but another branch of Ham's race; the kings of Sodom and Gomorrah rise in rebellion, when Lot, the outward mind, having departed from Abram, or faith, is taken captive. Ambrose thus traces the inward fulfilment here:—

"Quinque reges quinque sensus corporis nostri sunt, visus odoratus, gustus, tactus, auditus. Quator reges illecebræ corporales atque mundanæ sunt, quoniam et caro hominis et mundus et quator constat elementis. Meritò reges dicuntur, quia habet suum culpa dominatum, unde Apostolus ait, 'Non regnet peccatum in vestro mortali corpore.' Sensus igitur nostri facile delectationibus sæcularibus cedunt, et quadam earum potestate capiuntur. Corporales enim delectationes et illecebras hujus sæculi non vincet, nisi mens quæ fuerit

"The five kings are the five senses of our body—sight, smelling, taste, touching, and hearing. Four of the kings are bodily and worldly allurements, as both man's flesh and the world consist of four elements. Deservedly are they called kings, because every wrong-doing has its sovereignity; whence the Apostle says: 'Sin shall not rule in your mortal body.' Therefore our senses yield easily to worldly delights, and are captivated by their power. For he shall not overcome the bodily delights and allurements of this age unless the mind shall spiritalis, ad hærens Deo, et se totam a terrenis separans deflexio (*i.e.*, Lot), omnis his capitur; unde Johannes ait, 'Væ habitantibus in terrâ.'"—*De Abr.*—Lib. II., ch. 7, § 41.

be spiritual, cleaving to God, and separating itself entirely from earthly [matters]. Every turning aside (*i.e.*, Lot) is taken by these; whence John says: 'Woe to the dwellers on earth.'"

"As to the numbers here—viz., five and four—Augustine says, that *five* always refers to something connected with the senses—*Enar.* in Psalm xlix. (E. V. 50), § 9; Tract. in Johan. xv. § 21, and xxiv. § 5. He instances the five barley loaves; the five husbands of the woman of Samaria; the five brothers of the rich man; and other fives connected with the five senses; while *four* is always connected with the world—*Serm* cclii., ch. 10; *De diebus Pasch.* The mystical serpent of the Hindoos is generally represented with five heads, which are said to signify the five senses." See Payne Knight's *Inquiry into the Symbolical Language of Mythology*, p. 56.

"Denique Cethura, quam nunc senex Abraham sortitur in matrimonium, θυμίαμα, interpretatur, quod est incensum vel bonus odor. . . . Si quis ergo vestrûm est in quo suavitas misericordiæ, si quis sine intermissione orandc offert domino semper incensum, et dicit, 'Dirigatur oratio mea sicut incensum in conspectu tuo, elevatio manum mearum sacrificium vespertinum,' . . . hic Cethuram duxit uxorem. . . . Profectus etenim sanctorum Scriptura figuraliter per conjugia designat," &c.—*Origen, Hom.* XI. *in Gen.*

"Lastly, Keturah, whom Abraham as an old man sought in marriage, is interpreted by a Greek word, θυμίαμα, which means incense, or sweet savour. . . . If, therefore, there is any of you in whom there is the sweetness of mercy; if any of you, without intermission, always offers incense in praying to the Lord, and says: 'My prayer is directed, as it were, like incense in Thy sight, and the lifting up of my hands like an evening sacrifice,' . . . that man has married Keturah. . . . For Scripture figuratively designates the growth of the righteous by marriage," &c.

On this subject Mr. Jukes makes the following deeply interesting and instructive comments:—

"The stage we now have reached is marked by Abraham taking another wife. We read: 'Then again Abraham took a wife, and her name was Keturah; and she bare him Zimran, and Jokshan, and Medan, and Midian, and Ishbak, and Shuah.'—As our inward life changes its form at every fresh stage—from Adam to Abel, then from Seth to Noah, then to Abraham, and from him to Isaac and other sons,—so the truth embraced at each successive stage differs in form according to the varying form of the elect Spirit which embraces it. Sarah is Abraham's wife; in other words, the Spirit of Faith (Abraham) lays hold of Truth under the Sarah form, that is, the promise. Now, after Sarah's death, that is, after the form in which we have first embraced the New Covenant as a form is dead, for it yet lives in Spirit;—when we see that forms of truth, even the best, are given to serve us for a season, and then as forms to pass away;—when this is not only believed but known, and a new form of truth, suited to the growing spirit of sonship, is found and loved by it; then, at this point Abraham takes another wife: that spirit of faith, so long without fruit, which in its haste tried law, and 'when as good as dead' begot the seed of promise out of the barren free-woman, now takes another form of truth, by which it rapidly produces many sons. The question is, What form of Truth? What principle is it that Keturah represents? . . . Keturah is that practical truth, which neither *law* nor *promise*, neither bond-maid nor free-woman, succeeds to both at this stage of faith's life, when the truth which Sarah represents has passed from an outward form into a higher state. . . . How many lovely fruits have been borne, the offspring of faith, and that not by law, but by the precious truth which Keturah represents! . . . Isaac is not Keturah's son. Sonship is not of law, nor of the practical truth, which, though not laws, is somewhat akin to it. Sonship will no more come of these than figs will grow from slips of myrtle, or vines from acorns; yet Keturah's sons, like oaks and myrtle, are pleasant, and lovely too in their season; though they cannot inherit all Abraham's good things.

"Then Abraham gave up the ghost and died, "the Spirit of faith, like that truth which it has so long been united to, now passes away as an outward form, from forms, to live as a Spirit with God, who is Spirit. Isaac now succeeds to Abraham's place. The form, in which the elect life henceforth shews itself, is not *faith* so much as *understanding*, for the spirit of sonship is also a spirit of understanding. He, in whom it lives, not only believes, but to faith is added knowledge and intelligence, even 'the mind of Christ.' For when Isaac is come, we are no more under the schoolmaster (the law) as servants or as children not knowing a father's will; but as sons, and because we are sons, are led in the spirit of sonship into all knowledge, and spiritual 'understanding in the acknowledgment of the mystery of God the Father and of Christ' (Col. ii. 2).

"Up to this point, though the spirit of sonship has come, it has been comparatively feeble, and faith has been the ruling life. But now faith is no more in the flesh, but is changed from an earthly form into a spirit. Isaac therefore, takes Abraham's place; that is, faith is succeeded in our souls by spiritual understanding, which, like Isaac, inherits all Abraham's wealth, and is the heir possessing all the riches of true faith (Genesis xxv. 5, 'And Abraham gave all that he had unto Isaac.') I feel how little words can express the spiritual reality represented here. Those only who know the blessed fact within, will be able really to see the force of Abraham's death and Isaac's succession to all his goods; faith now lost in sight, while in its place the spirit of understanding, which is the spirit of sonship, inherits the things of faith." *

The foregoing passages have been selected almost at random from the vast storehouse of Christian Occultism, and are not intended to represent a decisive exposition of the many psychic problems that are under the guise of allegory discussed and more reveiled than revealed. Indeed, it would require the study of a lifetime to master the views that each system of Theosophy holds, or has held on the subject which now occupies us, and which we must, nevertheless, endeavour to

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* See John viii. 31, 32. Where our Lord promises to "those who *believed* on him," that "if they would continue in his word, they should know the truth, and the truth should make them free." Compare also St. Paul's *faith* in Christ dead and risen again (1 Cor. xv. 3, 4).

present in a chapter as concisely, and as best we can; for it is the subject which underlies every religion of the past and present, the foundation on which each has been built up, as a faith to save. The task, therefore, is an important and a difficult one, and however familiar we may have fancied ourselves to be with the theme, now that we have fairly begun it, we find ourselves in the mental position of the great Newton, when he declared to have but picked up a pebble on the sea shore.

Only to the Theosophist, however, is the Bible a Theosophic book. The Dogmatist, the Rationalist, the Archæologist, the Historian, and the Mythologist, each has attempted to interpret this venerable volume according to his own view; but the inner and eternal value can only be set forth by those who are on the interior and eternal plane.

The more we study the Bible the more we see that the symbolism of the East was a perfect language, written and understood by those who had learnt or been inspired to trace the unvarying similitudes to the realities of the interior or spiritual realm, which is the world of causation; this assertion will be found to be borne out by the evidence we have offered, which evidence, if we were to quote yet more fully from the writings of the Fathers of the Christian Church, could be increased a hundredfold; but we have already devoted more space to them than we had intended, and we have other sources to quote from on this most important subject which must not be neglected.

Space indeed fails us to give quotations from the

Christian Mystics concerning the interior meaning of the Creation, Fall, Deluge, Egypt, Wilderness, Babylon, and Jerusalem, of the Bible, with the final Resurrection and Ascension of the *Spiritualized* Soul, although we are sorely tempted to do so, for all is so clearly and beautifully explained in their writings that the advanced mind opens at once to receive their teachings; it being so constituted as to respond to Divine Truth, like an echo resounding through the long corridors of a distant past, awakening its dormant intuitions to the consciousness of its own Infinite and Divine Source.

It is a study in which all advanced minds must take the deepest interest, as it so deeply concerns each one personally; and only the most light and frivolous of mortals, in the hey-day of youth and prosperity, who are too earth-bound to bestow a thought on the past or to feel a fear for the future, can be indifferent concerning a true and correct explanation of the Scriptures in which they have been taught from their youth, and in which they have a living interest.

To the serious minded, we cannot too earnestly recommend the study of the Christian Mystics as likely to afford them all the knowledge they have doubtless often longed to obtain concerning the mysteries of their own origin, and of the long and often painful journey through earth-life to the unknown shore that awaits them at its end.

In the writings of Jacob Boehme, or Behmen, the greatest Theosophic Mystic of the sixteenth century, they will find clearly set forth all they have ever longed to know, the only drawback to their pleasure being his somewhat ancient and verbose style; but easy compendiums of his writings, once so scarce and expensive, are now appearing, which greatly facilitate their so necessary study in this the fulness of time; for the New Era that is dawning will be better understood and appreciated by those who possess a knowledge of the interior or esoteric meaning of all that has gone before; and it is absolutely necessary to have a right idea of the state from which the spirit in man fell, to be able to conceive and comprehend the state to which it is now called upon to return, with all the knowledges it has acquired and made its own through its long course of contact with Matter during the development of its intellectual and spiritual faculties on a material earth; for the regeneration of man is by *Involutional Evolution.*

We will conclude this eulogy of Jacob Boehme with a testimony concerning the writings of our favourite Mystic, from an ancient author who was deeply learned in mystic lore and in the Theosophical Interpretation of the Scriptures:—

> "*Whatever the thrice great* HERMES *delivered as Oracles from his Prophetical Tripos; or* PYTHAGORAS *spake by authority; or* SOCRATES *debated, or* ARISTOTLE *affirmed; yea, whatever Divine* PLATO *prophesied, or* PLOTINUS *proved; this, and all this, or a far Higher and Profounder Philosophy is (I think) contained in the Teutonic's Writings. And if there be any friendly medium which can possibly reconcile*

those Ancient Differences between the Nobler Wisdom, which hath fixed her Palace in Holy Writ, and her stubborn Handmaid, Natural Reason, this happy Marriage of the Spirit and the Soul, this wonderful consent of Discord in one Harmony, we owe in a great measure to Teutonicus, his skill.

"*Only let not the Non or Mis-understanding of the most rational Reader (if not a little sublimed above the Sphere of Common Reason) be imputed as a fault to this Elevated Philosopher, no more than 'twas to the Divine Plotine, whose highest Notions many, even of his own School after much Study, were not able to reach.*"

Hermetic Philosophy is very little known at the present day. Its adepts profess to be in possession of a Secret which they call the *gift* of *God*. Its study has been prosecuted under many names; among which are Alchemy, Astrology, Art, Magic, etc.; but the few who really understand it are decidedly Mystics, even if they prefer to style themselves Hermetic Philosophers.

To begin with Alchemy. It is no doubt generally known that there are two classes of Alchemists: those who employ themselves in the search for Material Gold, and those who seek for the true Philosopher's Stone by devout contemplation upon the nature of God and man—upon the human Soul, and its capacities for spiritual knowledge, for happiness, and for immortality.

The much talked of Philosopher's Stone was a mere symbol for human perfection; the perfection of the Christ. Hence Jesus was often called the Head Stone of the Corner, and likened to the Stone which the ignorant builders refused.

All Alchemic and Hermetic books have one pervading doctrine, that of purification as a first step in the work of obtaining the Stone, or of making the Gold. A pure heart and a right spirit is the way to the Philosopher's Stone, if it is not the Stone itself, the pearl of great price, to obtain which is not the hope of heaven, but heaven itself. All Hermetic writers communicated with each other by means of a conventional language, writing of Salt Sulphur Mercury, or Mercury Sol and Luna, etc., through so endless a variety of expressions that it often became necessary to employ a Dictionary to ascertain their real meaning; and such a Dictionary, published in the seventeenth century, is before us as we write.

To understand the reasons why those Theosophists concealed their real meaning from observation under these enigmatical modes of writing, one must be well read in Church history; and one's nerves must often have thrilled with horror at the hideous cruelties and fiendish persecutions practised on all whose souls were large enough to dare to differ from the teachings of the Church, and to venture to try to find the way to Christ and Truth, and Wisdom and Goodness, for themselves.

There is no doubt that the Alchemists of the Middle Ages were true Hermetic Philosophers, and that their writings are to be judged and interpreted from the standpoint of Hermetic philosophy; a Wisdom that is again being revived without any necessity for disguises in these our happier days of "*making known*"; and accordingly a Hermetic Society was publicly inaugurated in London on the Day of St. George (the slayer of the Dragon), May 9th, 1884, whose able President, we must not fail to remark in passing, as a further sign of the feminine or Bridal Era now dawning, is a young and lovely lady, well known for her great literary and scientific attainments.

In her opening address she said:

> "Our chief and central aim is to raise the level of the material religious ideal, and by withdrawing it from the external and natural to the interior and spiritual plane, to defeat the designs of materialism upon the stronghold of the moral life. So long as religion builds upon the mere historic facts and shifting phenomena of Time, she builds upon a sand-bank, on which the advancing tide of science and critical philosophy is daily encroaching, and which, sooner or later, will be swept away and engulfed with all that is founded thereon. But when she learns the secret of Esoteric Interpretation (for the name of Peter, by its original derivation, signifies Interpreter, and is therein one with Hermes), then, in sooth, the gates of Hell shall be powerless against her, and she need fear no more the noisy beating of the sea surf on the shore beneath the 'holy hill.' It is on this Hermetic stock of inward illumination and spiritual life, called by Trismegistus, 'the Mount of Regeneration,' that the great Mystics of all times have ever taken their stand."

This is a great truth, and hereon were founded the Pythagorean and Neoplatonic schools of the Alexandrian Gnostics; and in far more recent times the Doctrines of one of the greatest expositors of Scripture that has arisen since the days of the great "Teutonic Philosopher" before mentioned. We allude to Emmanuel Swedenborg, a man of immense learning, on whose truly inspired interpretation of the inward meaning of Scripture has been founded the so-called "*New Church*," composed of a considerable body of Christians spread over many countries, who believe, and not without foundation, that the "New Jerusalem" is about to come down from heaven to bless the world.

It is always at a time when religious faith is at its lowest ebb, the very foundation of the fabric of established Religions loosened, and clouds of doubt and uncertainty hanging over the first tenets of belief, that a new revelation of Divine and Spiritual truth is imperiously needed, and the dawn of a New Day arises to lighten the darkness and gloom of night; thus has it ever been that the "*Evening and the Morning*" have formed the day of each creation or revelation.

Emmanuel Swedenborg was born at Stockholm on the 29th January, 1688. Thus just two hundred years ago. He was a philosopher, and a man of great Science, whose important and voluminous writings on Natural History and Scientific Subjects still form the College Text-Books in Sweden.* Many of the experiments and observations on magnetism, believed to be of much more modern date, are contained in the scientific works of Swedenborg. In 1744 he published, at Amsterdam, a work on the Animal Kingdom, in which were contained some remarkable discoveries of his own on Anatomy. The merit of which also was claimed by other scientific men many years afterwards. It was in the year 1749 that Swedenborg published in London a work of a most remarkable character, professing to disclose discoveries far higher and more important than any of his former scientific discoveries; a work professing to lay open to the world a new and hidden meaning in the Scriptures, quite different from the sense of the letter, and to disclose the Rules for understanding this, which were before completely unknown. And this not in a general manner, or in the form of conjecture, but beginning with the first chapter of Genesis, and taking up the literal sense word by word, showing that there is to each word, besides the common literal meaning, another Spiritual signification within it, as a bright sword within its sheath, and that all these hidden or Spiritual significations, in any passage or verse, make, when put together, complete sense; infinitely deeper and more instructive than the literal sense; so that in this manner each verse is shown to have two distinct senses, quite different from each other, yet each complete in itself. This internal sense of the word is called the *Spiritual Sense* of Scriptures. The work itself is entitled the ARCANA CŒLESTIA.

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* The Secretary of the English Royal Society thus speaks of one of his numerous scientific works, entitled *Principia Rerum Naturalium, or "Principles of Natural Things."* "For the sake of such as understand Latin, we must not pass by this magnificent and laborious work of Emmanuel Swedenborg, in the second and third volume of which he has not only given the best account of the methods and newest improvements in metallic works in all places beyond the seas, but also in England and America. It is to be wished we had extracts from this work in English."

And now, what are we to think of this remarkable work containing the exposition of a complete internal or allegorical meaning, not only of a few verses, but of chapter after chapter, and showing a complete and connected spiritual sense throughout the whole. This spiritual sense must either have been a contrivance and composition of the author's, or else it was a simple bringing forth of interior truth, which had always existed, and waited only the due time to be brought forth, and the key given to the world and the Church by which to open and understand it correctly.

The same key serves to unlock chapter after chapter, not only of Genesis and Exodus, and all the books of the Old Testament,—completely setting forth and explaining the internal signification, or spiritual sense of each, giving a reason for everything, and for the principle of interpretation itself,—but it equally serves to unlock the spiritual sense of that sealed book, the Apocalypse of St. John, or Book of Revelation, which has been an embarrassment and a marvel to the Church in all ages, on account of its obscurity and its very allegorical style. And what is especially to be remarked is, that the spiritual sense of this Book, the last of the New Testament, is shown to be founded on the same principles, and opened by the same key which unlocks the spiritual sense of the Books of Genesis and Exodus, the first chapters of the Old Testament, written by other hands thousands of years before; "surely a strong proof that, however varied the human instruments employed, there was One Divine Inspirer of the whole." And, moreover, this *rule* of interpretation shows every word in the Book of Revelation to have the same interior signification as it has in the Book of Genesis. This spiritual sense is not of a fanciful or visionary cast, but it is an exposition of high and important religious truths concerning man's Soul and his eternal interests, concerning the nature of Goodness and Truth, such as alone can be found in the Word of God. And this rule of interpretation serves to bring forth rich and beautiful Gems of Truth which lie hidden and unknown under the shrouding letter of the Word, or outward natural sense, just as precious stones are hidden for ages in the earth till in the course of Providence the full time arrives for their being discovered, and given to man for his use.

But let us hear what Swedenborg himself says concerning this "*doctrine of Correspondences*" which was revealed to him:

> "It is not known at the present day what Correspondence is. The primary cause of this ignorance is that man has removed himself from heaven by the love of self and of the world, and regards only those things which are of the world, because they gratify the external senses, and pays no regard to spiritual things which gratify the internal senses, and delight the rational mind; wherefore they cast these things from them, saying that they are too high to be objects of thought. The Ancients did otherwise: to them the Science of Correspondences was the chief of all sciences, by it they also acquired intelligence and wisdom; and those who were of the Church had by it communication with heaven, for the Science of Correspondence is an Angelic Science. The most ancient people thought from Correspondence, like the angels; therefore also they spoke with angels. . . . . But at this day that Science is so entirely lost, that it is not known what Correspondence is.
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> "Now because without a perception of what Correspondence

is nothing can be known concerning the spiritual world, nor concerning its influx into the natural, nor even what the spiritual principle is in respect to the natural; nor can anything be known concerning the spirit of man, and concerning its operation in the body, nor concerning the state of man after death; therefore it is to be told what is Correspondence and what is its quality.

"The whole natural world corresponds to the spiritual world in every particular; wherefore whatever exists in the natural world from the spiritual, is said to be correspondent. It is to be known that the natural world exists from the spiritual world, altogether as an effect from its efficient cause. What is called the natural world is all that expanse which is under the sun, and receives from it light and heat, but the spiritual world is heaven. In heaven the sun of the world does not appear, nor anything from that sun, still there is a sun there, and light and heat, and there also are all the things that are in the world, and innumerable more, but not from a like origin; for the things which are in heaven are spiritual, but those which are in the world are natural. The sun of heaven is the Lord; the light there is Divine Truth, and the heat there is Divine Good, which proceed from the Lord as from a sun; from that origin are all things that exist and appear in the heavens; and also, through the medium of the sun of the world, all things natural exist on earth. It is to be observed, however, that that sun is not the Lord Himself, but *from* the Lord; the Divine Love and Divine Wisdom proceeding from Him appears in that world as a sun.

"Because man is a heaven, and also a world in the least form after the image of the greatest,* therefore there is within him a spiritual world and a natural world. The interiors, which are of his mind, and which bear reference to the understanding and will, constitute his spiritual world; and the exteriors, which are of his body, and which bear reference to his senses and actions, constitute his natural world. Whatever, therefore, exists in his natural world, that is, in his body and its senses and actions, from his spiritual world, that is, from his mind and understanding, is called correspondent.

"What the quality of Correspondence is may be seen in man from his face. In the face which has not been taught to dissemble, all the affections of the mind present themselves visibly in a natural form; hence the face is called the index of the mind. In like manner, the things which are of the understanding are sensibly manifested in the speech, and the things which are of the will, in the gestures of the body. Those things, therefore, which are done in the body, whether in the face or in the speech, or in the gestures, are called Correspondences.

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* For this reason man is called a Microcosm.

"There is a correspondence of man with heaven, and from that correspondence he subsists, for man does not subsist from any other source. Heaven is distinguished into kingdoms, one of which is called the celestial, and the other the spiritual kingdom. The celestial kingdom in general corresponds to the heart, and to all things in the body that refer to the heart; and the spiritual kingdom, to the lungs, and to all things in the body that refer to them. The heart and the lungs also constitute two kingdoms in man: the heart reigns there by the arteries and veins, and the lungs by the nerves and moving fibres, both of them in every force and action. In every man, in his spiritual world, which is called his spiritual man, there are also two kingdoms; one of the will, and the other of the understanding. The will reigns by the affections of good, and the understanding by the affections of truth. These kingdoms correspond to the kingdoms of the heart and lungs in the body. The case is similar in the heavens: the celestial kingdom is the will-principle of heaven, in which kingdom the good of *love* bears rule; and the spiritual kingdom is the intellectual principle of heaven, and in that kingdom *truth* bears rule: these are what correspond to the functions of the heart and lungs in man. It is from this correspondence that the *heart* in the Word signifies the *will*, and also the good of *love*, and that the breath of the *lungs* signifies the *understanding* and the truth of faith: hence also it is that the affections are ascribed in the heart, although in reality they are not there seated nor thence derived.

"That the will corresponds to the heart may be seen from this, that all the affections of love alter the motions of the heart, as is evident from the pulsations of the arteries which act in unison with the heart. Its changes and motions, according to the affections of love, are innumerable,—those felt by the finger are a few—as that it beats slow or quick, high or low, soft or hard, equal or unequal; therefore differently in joy and sadness, in tranquility of mind and in anger, in intrepidity and in fear, and so forth. Since the motions of the heart thus change and vary according to the affections of a man's love, therefore many of the ancients, and from them some of the moderns, have ascribed the affections *to* the heart, and have placed their habitation there. Hence in conversation we speak of a stout heart and a timid heart, a soft and a hard heart, a great and a small heart, a whole and a broken heart, ... and similar language is used in the Word because the Word is written by correspondences. . . . .

"That there is a connection by correspondence between the understanding and the lungs follows from what has been said of the correspondence of the will with the heart. There are two things that rule in the spiritual man or the mind, namely, the Will and the Understanding; and there are two things that rule in the natural man or the body,—the heart and the lungs; and there is a correspondence of all things of the mind with all things of the body: hence it follows, that while the will corresponds to the heart, the understanding corresponds to the lungs. Every one also may perceive in himself that the understanding corresponds to the lungs both from his thought and his speech. From speech: because not the smallest expression can proceed from the mouth without the aid of the lungs. From thought: because no one can think unless his breathing conspires and accords; wherefore when he thinks tacitly he breathes tacitly; if he thinks deeply he breathes deeply; he retracts and relaxes, compresses and elevates the lungs according to the influx of affection from love, either slow or hastily, eagerly, mildly, or attentively: indeed, if he hold his breath altogether, he cannot think at all.

N.B.—It is a tenet of angelic wisdom, that unless the Will and the Understanding, or affection and thought, as also charity and faith *fix* and *clothe* themselves in works or deeds, when it is possible, they are only like airy things that pass away like the breath, or like forms in the air, which perish: and that they first remain with man, and become a part of his life, when man effectuates and does them. The reason is, because *the ultimate is the complex, continent, and basis of prior things.* Faith is but an airy form or phantasm separate from good works, and such also are charity and faith without their exercise Hence it may be concluded that the whole of charity and faith is in works; and that charity and faith without works are like rainbows about the sun, which vanish and are dissipated by a cloud: wherefore works are so often mentioned in the Word, and it is said we are to do them, and that our salvation depends upon them.

"It is now to be seen that all things of the earth and of the world are correspondences. All things of the earth are distinguished into three kinds, which are called kingdoms, namely the animal kingdom, the vegetable kingdom, and the mineral kingdom. Those things which are in the animal kingdom are correspondences in the first degree, because they live; those which are in the vegetable kingdom are correspondences in the second degree, because they only grow; those which are in the mineral kingdom are correspondences in the third degree, because they do but accrete.* The correspondences in the animal kingdom are living creatures of various kinds, both those which walk and creep upon the earth, and those which fly in the air.

"But what the correspondence of spiritual things with natural is may be illustrated by examples. The animals of earth correspond to affections—the gentle and useful to good affections, the fierce and useless to evil affections. Specifically, cows and oxen correspond to the affections of the natural mind; sheep and lambs to the affections of the spiritual mind; but the winged animals, according to their species, correspond to the intellectual things of each mind. Hence it is that various animals, and also pigeons and doves, in the Israelitish Church, which was a representative church, were applied to holy uses, and from them were made sacrifices and burnt offerings; for they corresponded to spiritual things, which were understood in heaven according to correspondences. The reason why animals, according to their kinds and species, are affections, is because they live, and everything has life from no other source than from affection, and according to it; hence every animal has innate knowledge according to the affections of its life. Man, also, is similar to them as to his natural man, and therefore is compared to them in common discourse—as, if gentle, he is called a lamb; if fierce, a bear or a wolf; if cunning, a fox or a serpent, and so forth.

"There is a similar correspondence with the things of the vegetable kingdom. A garden in general, corresponds to heaven in relation to its intelligence and wisdom; wherefore heaven is called the garden of God and Paradise. Trees, according to their species, correspond to the perceptions and knowledge of good and truth, from which are derived intelligence and wisdom. Hence it is that in the Word trees are so often named, and heaven and the church and man are compared to them, as to the vine, the olive, the cedar, and others; and the good works which they do are compared to fruits. The food also, which is from them, especially that which is from seed raised in fields, corresponds to the affections of good and truth, because these nourish spiritual life; and hence bread in general corresponds to the affections of all good, because that, more than the rest, sustains life, and also because by bread is meant all food. On account of this correspondence, also, the Lord calls Himself the Bread of Life, and for this reason bread was in holy use in the Israelitish Church, and set upon the table in the tabernacle. On account of that correspondence, also, the holiest thing of Christian worship is the Holy Supper, in which there is given bread and wine.

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* It has been said of spirit that it sleeps in the mineral, breathes in the vegetable, dreams in the animal—and awakens in man.

"As all things which are according to Divine Order correspond to heaven, so all things which are contrary to Divine Order correspond to hell. The things which correspond to heaven have all reference to good and truth; those which correspond to hell to evil and falsity.

"It was said above that the spiritual world, which is heaven, is conjoined to the natural world by correspondences; hence by means of correspondence there is communication with heaven. . . . . . If man were acquainted with correspondence he would understand the Word as to its spiritual sense, and thence it would be given him to know Arcana, nothing of which he sees in the sense of the letter. For in the Word there is a literal sense and there is a spiritual sense. The literal sense consists of such things as are in the world, but the spiritual, of such things as are in heaven; and because the conjunction of heaven with the world is by correspondences, therefore such a Word has been given that everything in it, even to an iota, corresponds.

"The Word was so given to unite heaven and earth, or angels with men; it is therefore written, that by the angels it may be understood spiritually; while by man it is understood naturally; and so a holy feeling may flow in through the angels by which *union* is effected. Such is the Word, both in the historical parts and in the prophetical; but the internal sense appears less in the historical than in the prophetical parts, because the historical parts are written in a different style; but the expressions, nevertheless, are all significative. The historical parts were given that those who are but little children in growth of knowledge, may by these be led to the reading of the Word; for the historical things are delightful to them, and become fixed in their minds. Such, for instance, are the accounts of paradise, of the first man, of the tree of life in the midst, and of the tree of science, where was the serpent that deceived. These are knowledges that contain in them what is Divine, and admit into them truths spiritual and celestial, because they *represent* these truths. Such knowledges are also contained in the other historical parts of the Word—as in what is said of the tabernacle and of the temple, and of the construction of each.

"The most ancient manner of writing was that of representing things by persons, and by words, by which was understood something altogether different from what was expressed. In such manner, indeed, that nothing was literally true just as it was written, but under these narratives something allegorical was understood. Thus they set forth the various affections under the forms of gods and goddesses, to which the heathen nations afterwards instituted Divine worship; which may be known to every scholar, since such ancient books are still extant. This method of writing they derived from the most ancient people, who lived before the flood, and who represented to themselves things heavenly and Divine, by such as are visible on the earth and in the world, and thus filled their minds and souls with joyous and delightful perceptions. The most ancient people, as they had communication with spirits and angels, had no other speech than this, which was full of representatives, and in every expression of which there was a Spiritual sense. . . . Hence it may appear how far man afterwards removed himself from heaven: when, at this day, he does not even know that there is in the Word anything else than what appears in the letter, not even that there is a spiritual sense; and whatever is mentioned beyond the sense of the letter is called mystical, and rejected on that account. Hence also it is that communication with heaven is at this day intercepted, insomuch that few believe there is any heaven, and, what is surprising, much fewer amongst the learned and erudite than amongst the simple."

Thus it will be seen that Swedenborg, of all men, understood and applied the declaration of St. Paul, that "*the letter killeth, but the Spirit giveth life.*" He first sought *the Spirit of Truth* with all his heart and Soul, and was in due time rewarded for his earnest search by receiving, what he calls, "a full revelation of the Lord," and "the opening of his internal sight or spiritual understanding."

But this statement, which may perhaps be difficult to understand by those who have not studied his writings for themselves, we shall be better able to explain in our Work on the New Dispensation, which is now near at hand, and for which the writings of Swedenborg have done so much, under God's providence, to *prepare the way*, as the voice of one *crying in the wilderness* prepared the way for the coming of the Lord at the commencement of the Dispensation now closing.

It will then be seen that the whole interior sense, and also the reason for sacred or secret writings, ultimately turns on *One Pivot*, which assertion may be summed up in the declaration of Swedenborg as to his having received a full revelation of *the Lord*, and that its allegorical style was adopted throughout as the means to contain, whilst at the same time it served to conceal, this Divine Arcanum—viz., the Secret of *the Christ* or Saviour.

Paul alludes to this secrecy, in his Epistle to the Ephesians iii. 5, 9, as "The *mystery* of Christ which in other ages was not made known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed unto his holy apostles," &c., and speaks of "the fellowship of the *mystery*, which from the beginning of the world hath been hid in God." and again of "the preaching of Jesus Christ according to the *mystery* which was kept secret since the world began" (Romans xvi. 25). "Praying that utterance may be given unto me that I may open my mouth boldly to make known the *mystery* of the gospel" (Eph. vi. 19). "To fulfil the Word of God; even the *mystery* which hath been hid from ages and from generations but now is made manifest to his saints" (Col. i. 26).

It may well be conceived how puerile and far from the mark appears the recent controversy on "Genesis," in the pages of the *Nineteenth Century* Magazine, between Mr. Gladstone and Professors Huxley, Réville, Max Müller, and Drummond, to those who have really received this revelation of the Lord *in* themselves; and even to those who are at all aware of the Hermetic Science, and the mysterious language universally adopted by all so-called Alchemists to disguise their search for the Philosopher's Stone, and Hermetically seal up the secret at a time when the Church was all-powerful; and its whole power was brought to bear for the utter extermination of those who were believed to be earnest seekers for the truth, which they were consequently obliged to disguise under the name of Gold, and Precious Stones, thus in their turn making use of allegorical expressions to conceal, whilst at the same time they endeavoured to impart the truth to their fellow-seekers.

Surely the distinguished writers of the articles in question are not even *Modern* Masons, for any Entered Apprentice would have known more of the Secrets of the Craft than to take these writings in the literal sense of the *Letter that killeth*, as they have each and all done whether believers or unbelievers in Revelation; not one of them appearing in the least aware of the Spiritual character of the Book they have criticised as a mere record of things physical and historical, without forming even a dim conception of the great vital truths concealed therein from the vulgar gaze, or suspecting that in that Arcane history there are depths which they have not sounded and *cannot* sound, since they have passed on without even perceiving them.

All ⁂ Masons know that the sacred veil of allegory has been drawn to conceal that which is holy from the common gaze: "Give not that which is Holy to the Cowans" (Dogs) was from the beginning the maxim of the wise and pure; as may be seen from the third chapter of Genesis, the oldest writing in the world, whose interpretation belongs to a transcendental masonry, beyond even the 33rd Degree. "When I find," says Godfrey Higgins, "learned men believing Genesis *literally*, which the ancients, with all their failings, had too much sense to receive except allegorically, I am tempted to doubt the reality of the improvement of the human mind."

All these Bible myths (some of them no doubt based on historical facts), figure the truth that man's higher self, which is a direct emanation of the Divine principle, attracted by his lower or material nature, falls a prey to it. The great Hebrew doctor, Rabbi Maimonedes, gives a fixed rule for the interpretation of the Hieratic, *i.e.*, Sacred books, which should never be forgotten by commentators. He says: "Every time you find in our books a tale, the reality of which seems impossible, a story which is repugnant both to reason and common sense, then be sure that tale contains a profound allegory veiling a deeply mysterious truth; and the greater the absurdity of the letter the deeper the wisdom of the Spirit." This is the key to both Bible and Talmud.

But Maimonedes also said: "Whoever shall discover the true meaning of the six days of Creation, and of the first chapters of Genesis, shall be careful not to divulge it, or raise the allegorical veil which conceals the Sacred Truth from the profane gaze of those who are not prepared to receive it." And if we are now, to a certain extent, acting contrary to this wise injunction, it is that the Word has gone forth, the time for making known has come. The TIME, TIMES, and HALF-A-TIME, for which the Prophet was ordered "to close the book and seal the sayings," must be nearly, if not quite, completed; for the seals have already been removed for very many. The signs of the times are also confirmative of the Advent of the New Dispensation. The message to Daniel was: "*But thou, O Daniel, shut up the words and seal the book, even to* *the time of the end: many shall run to and fro, and knowledge shall be increased.*" Thus with interior revelation, and exterior confirmation, we who have received the mission begin to see it opening out before us day by day, and to comprehend the Command laid upon us by the Divine Love and Wisdom, which is to *unseal* and *open* that which the Prophet had been commanded to close and seal!

Since writing the above and correcting it in print, we have had the pleasure of seeing that the recent controversy in the *Nineteenth Century Magazine* to which we have alluded has at least had one good effect, that of eliciting more satisfactory treatment of this important subject from one who is well versed in Hermetic Science, and who consequently possesses a profound knowledge of the Esoteric, or underlying truth.

In a lecture recently delivered at one of the meetings of the Hermetic Society, the Hon. Sec., Mr. Edward Maitland, read a paper concerning Genesis, taking for his motto the sentence of Paul—"*Even unto this day when Moses is read, the veil is upon their hearts.*" We are happy to be able to give a concise idea of some of the principal points of this lecture, as they will form a valuable completion to this chapter.

"Foremost among the quarters from which to determine the method of Scripture, are (1) the Bible itself; (2) the *concensus* of competent and accredited expositors; and (3) the argument from the nature of the case. The first includes the numerous exhortations on behalf of a "*spirit of understanding*" as essential to the comprehension of Scripture, and warnings against neglecting to seek such spirit;—both of which are unaccountable if the letter itself be the truth and the meaning obvious. There are also numerous declarations by, among others, Christ and Paul, asserting its allegorical and mystical character and reprobating the acceptance of the letter that kills instead of the spirit which gives life.

"Similarly with the most intelligent of the Christian Fathers, and notably all those of the second century; with the great Jewish commentators, and with that famous compendium of Hebrew transcendentalism the Kabbala; as also with numerous later writers of high authority, such as Dr. Everard, the translator in the seventeenth century of the chief Hermetic books; and Emmanuel Swedenborg.

"The reasons from the nature of the case why the literal sense of Scripture cannot be the true one, are, (1) because religion, with which alone a Bible is properly concerned, is, in virtue of its interior and spiritual character, addressed, not to the senses, but to the soul, and to affect this it must be one in nature with the soul. And (2) because that which is the object of religion, namely, man's salvation from the limitations of materiality, cannot be effected either by aught that, occurring on the physical plane, is itself material; or by aught extraneous to himself; but only by a process wholly spiritual and occurring *within* himself.

"It is true that many men of learning and piety—including the late Dr. Pusey—have denounced as 'impious' the practice of what they call the 'wresting Scripture from its obvious meaning.' But, as has just been shown, this denunciation includes not only the chief Christian Fathers and Jewish Commentators, but Christ and Paul. The fact is that, in their use of the term 'obvious,' the literalists beg the whole question. For the question is: To what faculty is it obvious, to the outer or the inner perception? and to which of those faculties does the apprehension of spiritual things belong? Nothing, certainly, can be more 'obvious' than the 'impiety' of setting aside the account which Holy Writ gives of itself, and ascribing to it falsehood, folly, or immorality on the strength of outward appearance, such as is the letter. While, to mystical apprehension, it is no less 'obvious' that the literal sense cannot be the one intended.

"The first result of the application of the '*Proem* to Genesis'—to borrow Mr. Gladstone's term—of the mystical canon of interpretation, is the discovery that it is not a proem at all in the strict sense, namely, that in which the term implies something which can, without mutilation of the book, be detached from it and relegated to the position of introduction or preface. For thus tested, it proves to be an integral part of the book, its indispensable first chapter. This is because the 'proem' represents in brief outline the whole series of the evolutionary processes which afterwards are described with ever increasing elaboration and complexity. It is the starting point and initial round of an upward pointing spiral, which, as it ascends, expands into continually widening circles and, nevertheless, contains the whole in itself, as the seed contains the plant.

"The supreme theme of the Bible from Genesis to the Apocalypse—a theme told over and over again upon this ever ascending level, in a series of allegorical presentations—is the regeneration of man by Involutional Evolution. It is, in other words, the Genesis and consummation of the 'Church of Christ' at once individual and collective; the term church implying no particular ecclesiastical organism of body of believers, but the entire order of genuine seekers after spiritual perfection, whatever the name or form of their faith, and whenever or wherever subsisting, whether on earth or in heaven. Of these, and of these only, does the true 'Israel' or 'Church of Christ' consist; and it is of the Church that the Bible, from the very first verse of Genesis, treats; the exhibition of the elaboration of the physical cosmos being, at most, but a secondary and subordinate object.

"On the plane with which we are concerned—the subjective plane—the 'proem' deals with the creation of man considered as an individuation of consciousness, and therein with his regeneration or 'redemption.' Not of the first, or any particular man, but of every man, from the first dawn in him of reason to his final completion in the Divine image. And the several 'days' of this creation denote the various stages or stations of the process, the nature and number of which are according to the principles or potencies instrumental in their accomplishment.

"These principles or potencies are those which in the Bible, the Kabala, and the Hermetic books, are styled variously Elohim, Sephiroth, the Seven Spirits of God, Gods and Archangels. They are not the Persons of the Trinity, as suggested by Mr. Gladstone and others; nor are they celestial beings before whom this Deity is displaying His energies, and whom He invites to co-operate in His latest and greatest work, as suggested by Professor Réville. Nor, again, is the plural term employed but as an instance of the style royal, as also suggested by him.

"These guesses are the result of the vicious practice, long and widely prevalent, of trying to get at the meaning of Scripture by the letter alone, and without reference to the system of thought which underlies and controls Scripture—the system called Hermetic and Kabalistic, and constituting the Gnosis. According to this system the Seven Elohim in question are the Divine Energies themselves, and represent the dynamic or active mode of Deity, as the Trinity represents the static or passive mode. The idea is that of a differentiation of the Divine Spirit, in its procession from the Godhead, into seven Spirits, by a process corresponding to that whereby light becomes distributed into seven rays in its emergence from the prism, these seven spirits are held to comprise all divine potencies, and only through them does Deity operate. They it is who, 'moving upon the face of the waters' or substance of creation, say '*Let there be Light*'; and they also who say '*Let us make man in our image*'; and who, accordingly, make him '*in the image of God, male and female*'; since being God, God's image is theirs, and as the prototype of humanity, that image is, like humanity, dual. It will thus be seen that, besides the generations of the visible world, and of the Church of Christ individual and collective, the 'proem' exhibits also the generation of the Gods.* This last occurs by *emanation*, which is the necessary antecedent to *evolution*; this being conceivable only as representing a reversion to an originally higher condition, since nothing can rise above its own level.

"On the plane on which we are dealing, therefore, the seven days of creation denote the seven stages of regeneration whereby the 'seven spirits of God' build up man in the Divine image, each stage corresponding to one of the 'seven planets,' of which, respectively, these spirits are regarded as the presiding angels; the seventh—or Sabbath of rest and perfection—being that wherein all these rays converge to form the Spiritual Sun of his system. By the attainment of this stage the man completes the 'planetary chain' within himself, having passed from without inwards, or from below upwards, from the condition of mental vacuity and obscurity, in which he is 'waste and void, and covered with darkness'—the angel of which is variously called Orifiel, Chronos, and Saturn,—through all intermediate stations, to the sun and centre, the kingdom of Uriel and Phœbus, the first of the gods, whose throne is in the midst of the heavens of the man's own system. Henceforth for him there is, as said in the Apocalypse,

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* See appendix on the Sephiroth.

'No night, for the Lord God giveth him light.' The Elohim of God are his own spirits. He has the universe in himself and the thrones of all the gods are in his temple. For the Macrocosm has epitomised itself in the Microcosm. Made in the image of God, the man is a manifestation of God.

"The doctrine of a multiplicity of earth-lives is involved in the system of thought concerned, seeing that the stupendous work of building up a man in the Divine image requires a corresponding period for its accomplishment. The term 'Regeneration' epitomises and resumes all holy writ, Biblical and mythological, and the real and true, because mystical and spiritual, theme of that *crux* of scholars the 'SOLAR MYTH,' is not the physical sun, but its counterpart the spiritual sun of the microcosm, man, disclosed to him—under the enlightening influence of the Angel Anael or Venus; for love is always the revealer—on the 'fourth day' of his spiritual creation, and finally substantialised in and made one with him when his 'warfare' with materiality 'is accomplished.' The creation of man thus regenerate is the true subject alike of the 'proem to Genesis,' and of that 'Bible written on the stars,' the planisphere of the Zodiac, the twelve signs of which, in their inmost significance denote the mystical 'twelve labours' of the Heraclean soul—soul of the resolute seeker after God,—on its way to its final perfection. To read the riddles of the ancients, we must plough with their heifer the spiritual consciousness.

"Doing this with the Book of Genesis, and to Intellect adding Intuition, so far from regarding it with Professor Drummond as but a presentation of one or two great elementary truths to the childhood of the world, and for children by children, we shall regard it as embodying the results of the profoundest wisdom, and as written by initiates for initiates.

"In the recognition and acceptance of this method of intepreting Scripture lies the one hope for the rehabilitation of religion and its reconciliation with science. For by exchanging the current materialistic, and therein idolatrous, presentation of Divine things for their spiritual and true one, religion will be at once emancipated from the bondage of the letter and the form, and lifted to a level inaccessible alike to the assaults of scepticism and the fluctuations of opinion, remaining meanwhile eternally verifiable by, and satisfying the highest aspirations of, that to which alone it is addressed, the HUMAN SOUL."

CHAPTER XII.

CONCLUSION.

THE knowledge or revelation of God comes to the world in cycles or waves, and old systems of RELIGION recede as the new advance. Down the river of time float systems upon systems, the new becoming merged with the old that it is at times difficult to distinguish one Theosophy from another, as mystic thought has but rarely precise demarcations.

Even the Sacred Writings of the Ancient Egyptians quote "the Ancients" with veneration; proving that a primitive Theosophy existed in pre-historic times, to which the ethnic system of the Egyptians was indebted; while Brahminism, possibly an unrecognised branch of Ancient Egyptian Theosophy, may be cited as another representative of that system of the primitive Wisdom-Religion. Later on Buddhism was planted on the ground of Brahminism similarly as the Theosophy of the Tao-Sse was engrafted upon a more ancient Esoteric tradition, whereof the Yih-King is the sole remaining exponent. Thus also is the Avesta indebted to the Vedas; the Kabbala has borrowed from the Avesta, Platonism and Kabbalism are nearly related, and Christianity cannot deny its mystic and Esoteric origin.

It would be a curious historical study to trace how the waves of Materialism and Mysticism alternately pass over the minds of mankind. Now the Materialists seem to have it all their own way; but hardly is their last theory enounced than it is overthrown by the *facts* of Mysticism, and a wave of mystic thought comes and sweeps away the dogmas of Materialism, and with them many an hitherto sceptical mind.

When the mystical degenerates to mere irrational emotionalism and fraudulent obscurantism, then Scepticism is a healthy reaction; but when Scepticism abuts in Atheism, Materialism, and Anarchy, Mysticism becomes a natural revolt of the Soul against the crushing darkness and ignorance of all things spiritual that arrogant pseudo-scientists would dogmatically enforce.

The unity in the variety of Theosophic ideals may have been intuitionally apprehended by advanced thinkers, who are neither Theosophists nor Initiates, and who approach the subject only from the plane of comparative religion.

James Freeman Clarke, in his "*Comparison of all Religions*" p. 60, advances the theory that "each religion has a type of its own to which it adheres during its whole growth and development."

"In every faith there is something transient, and something permanent: something essential and much that is accidental. But, in order to compare two or more systems of religion, it is necessary to be able to distinguish that which is essential from that which is non-essential. . . . . . The rule which may be laid down for determining the typical character of each religion can be thus stated:—Whatever marks are found in the system at its origin, and which continue with it through all its changes, may be regarded as belonging to its idea, and as part of its essence." *. . . .

The Author then sums up these types as follows:—

"Brahminism is faith in Spirit as the only substance—a substance which gives unity to all phenomena.

"The faith of Ancient Egypt was at the opposite pole of thought. It saw the Divine in variety, not in unity; in body, not spirit; in form, not substance.

"The Scandinavian religion saw the Divine in nature, appearing as force, making life a battle, and placing morality in self-reliance.

"The antagonist system to this was that of Greece, which saw the Divine manifested, not in nature but in man, having its essence in the beautiful, and its morality in the natural human development. The system of Zoroaster was the worship of free-will in the Creator and the created, and its morality consisted in the free struggle of right with wrong, inspired by the hope of an ultimate triumph of good over evil.

"I find the opposite pole to this in the system of Mohammed. Islam means the worship of one God as Supreme Will, whose law is fate, and whose service is submission.

"Buddhism is the deification of the human soul, saved by knowledge of the laws of nature. Buddhism makes morality consist in progress, by obedience to natural law as revealed by Buddha.

"The religion of Confucius is reverence for the past, and his morality is conformity to the highest properties and persons as established by superior persons.

"The essence of Judaism is the worship of one Supreme Spiritual Being, the Maker and Lord of all things. Its morality is obedience to His Law, which consists in loving and serving God and man."

The variety of religious views explains itself both anthropologically and theosophically. The type, as a combination of the individual and ethnic mind, is the

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* "This corresponds to the famous definition of Catholic Unity by Vincentius Lirinensis: quod ubique, quod semper, quod ab omnibus."

sum-total of theosophic knowledge to which a nation has attained in the capacity of its adepts.

The marks of distinction for theosophic systems are mostly Exoteric; the Esoteric part remains unaltered: Theosophy is One, even as Truth is One and God is One.

The manifestation of the Divine Spirit was the origin of all true Religions, and, in as far as the human mind was prepared to assimilate Divine Spirit-Truth, was the religious idea more or less divine and absolute, or more or less demonic and erroneous.

The knowledge of the identity of the Soul with God gave rise to anthropomorphic expressions about the Deity, which—although true in their occult meaning—when misunderstood, have but served to lead man away from the truth.

When men fell from Soul-guidance to the culte of spirits, polytheism, blood-sacrifices, idolatory and sensual perversions were the result.

Ignorance is the necrosy of the Soul; and suffering under this disease, men attributed Divine power to demons; and if all were known, this insane idea would be found to have survived even to this day.

We have evidence of a pre-historic Theosophy in the mystic myths that have descended to us from time immemorial. These allegories, couched in Hermetic terms, have in their spiritual significance never been openly interpreted. The Mythographic Age is possibly coeval with the full glory of Egyptian civilization, and points still further back to the Mythologic age;—the age of the gods and heroes.

Revelation appears to have followed the order of the planets as given in the seven days of the week, thus:—The Golden or Divine Age was no doubt before the Fall, and when men were comparatively Divine beings. This age, as it is traditionally recorded, was succeeded by a Silver or Lunar Age, reflecting the Solar past, when the masses became more earthly, and Soul-Life became occult, and the Arcanum of Initiates. The Martial or Iron Age then succeeded, when man degenerated into a fighting animal, and heroism became brute force. The age of Philosophies may well be designated as the Mercurial, which in turn gave way to the influence of Jove, Jahve; while the essential characteristic of the Mohammedan, save its denial of the equality of woman, makes it so far from being a masculine Revelation, rather all the more effeminate; and the mystics of that system, resorting by preference of all other to erotic symbols, would show it to be ruled by Venus. The age of Saturn, the slow, lame judgment of man, is even now giving way to a brighter future, and a New Golden Age is dawning.

Waves undefined, and undefinable, because spiritual, pass over mind and planet. Uncalculated and unsuspected cycles revolve, and events occur according to occult law, which we can only intuitionally guess, but never completely understand.

The waves indeed pass, but they leave deposits and traces, and in a measure all the past and future is stored in the present of the Eternal Mind. All the seven cycles or ages are even now among us, and have left their representatives unto this day, and we can find them all not only in that mirror of existence—the Soul, but also in the world around us.

We can only trace the most ancient manifestations of the Absolute in Myths and in the Hermetic language, in which they are embodied. There appears to have been a Universal Revelation, prefigured as the Paradisical or Golden Age, which was succeeded by the ages of Individual Manifestations or Revelations to Individuals. Of Hermes (if there was a Hermes, and this term was not merely intended for the mystic Divine Intelligencer, the Divine Soul), we have some miraculously preserved books, which however are attributed to the Neo-Platonists. Among all the Papyri not one treatise on Egyptian Philosophy has yet been unearthed. Many are there both mystical and occult, but none written manifestly in open, undisguised terms.

The books of the Brahmins, Buddhists, Magi, Sufis, &c., are now at last accessible to us,* and afford many an interesting study of the various individual Revelations; but no single book, except it be the Elements of Euclid, has yet been found to be one containing absolute truth, without an alloy of error.

If it were not for mathematics, we should have to make the hopeless statement that truth is only relative, and absolute truth is unattainable.

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* And how significative is this fact, of our having reached the time, times, and half-a-time when the Seals affixed by Divine command by Daniel should be removed, when knowledge should be increased and the Truth made known, that all outward Religions serve to contain Esoteric Revelations of the same Gospel—and that Buddha and Jesus are necessary to each other.

But, although no other book contains truth unmixed with error, the *source* of all truth is attainable to us. We need not despair of our inability to define the Infinite, so long as we know that the Infinite exists, that it is conscious of our existence, and cherishes us as parts of its own being.

No matter then whether we designate the Divine as "Being" or "State" in Christian or Buddhist phraseology, it must be experienced in order to be known; and not he who believes but he who *knows* is the true Christian or Buddhist.

Not that faith may be undervalued: "We must know in order to believe, and we must believe in order to understand;" but belief by itself has no life, it is merely the first round of the ladder, and there are a great number of rounds to ascend before the Heavens are reached.

Of what use, it may be objected, is it to unearth these old and forgotten systems? Our reply is, that if we are to forget the experience of the Past, then we may at once return to a state of barbarism, for we are only in advance of the Ancients by what we have gained through their experience. The dead may bury the dead, we would not reanimate them; we leave the past and live in the present, but let us not sink below the knowledge of the "dead and forgotten" systems. Neither may we call them dead which give life to two-thirds of the human race.

We have all that the Ancients had, if we will but study and make it ours; the same fountain of all knowledge is free to us, yet we neglect it, and there are some who would deny its very existence.

Whoever wants Soul-knowledge must go to his own Soul for it. The Ancients cannot have been more favoured than we; if they had Souls, so have we; it is only the knowledge that is wanting. "I AM ALL THAT IS, WAS, AND SHALL BE" was the inscription on the Temple of Isis, the Soul, "AND NO MORTAL EVER LIFTED MY VEIL." No mortal truly: for he who lifts the veil dividing the individual Spirit from the All-Soul, by that act becomes immortal—as God. "Have I not told you that ye are Gods?" What a proud saying, yet it came from the humblest of men, even Jesus the Son of Mary! But men forsake their divine kingdom and content themselves either to revile, or to ignore and deny the possibility of the Christ-State.

In the course of our investigations of the Occult, humble and insufficient as these may have been, we have arrived at the conclusion that words are very unreal, but the things they are intended to represent are the realities. Exoteric Religion is threshing the straw of words and neglecting the grain of the Spirit, that Esoteric reality which the words rather conceal than convey. No matter therefore what we are called, whether Hindu, Buddhist, Sufi, Christian, Kabbalist, Theosophist, or Spiritualist, let us *be* and let others name us; for we seek not distinctive designations. Enough sects and names are there among us, let us not increase their number. With minds free, thoughts pure, and actions true to God and humanity, no matter whether we are called Christians or not, let us *be* Christ-like and we shall attain to lasting salvation.

All Bibles, or so-called Sacred Writings, are in Spirit derived from God, the Infinite Divine Spirit; but having been given by inspiration, through human spirits, both embodied and disembodied, all partake in a measure of the imperfections of the channels through which they have passed.

Soul-Life alone is Perfection. All that comes from the astral-spheres of the unregenerate is in part true and in part false, in part good and in part evil, in part Divine, but more human. For the Spirit-spheres are but a continuation of the imperfect Life of earth, and a school to perfection but not Perfection itself.

It demands therefore some discernment to read theosophic writings; and those written by philosophers and logicians are preferable until the mind is sufficiently advanced to understand the meaning of the more intuitional writer, commonly called inspired, such as Prophets, Mystics, Sufis, &c.

A Divine Revelation or Manifestation to an individual must also be considered as pertaining in the first instance to that individual only. It may be accepted as a matter of creed by others, but it is not a Revelation manifested to their own Soul. A Revelation is generally in accordance with the development of the individual to whom it is revealed. The Divine Manifestation is attainable by a psycho-physical process, and may be absolute to the mind of the recipient, but cannot be accepted or even perceived by other minds until they enter upon the same psychic plane.

The view ever adapts itself to the standpoint, and a Revelation which appeared absolute from a given standpoint is so no more when the standpoint becomes more exalted. This only proves the development and growth of the ideal, and the absolute necessity of successive and continued Revelations from the Source of sources from which all truth is derived.

Ethnic religions, national gods and creeds are things of the past. Religious Thought aims at Catholicity, Universality, and Ideality; individual experience in preference to mere belief in historical personages and authorities. We still revere the great teachers of the past, but we do not worship them. They were human like ourselves, and as divine as they were, we could and should be.

Buddhism and Christianity are the most notable Catholic systems, having a real Gnostic base whereby their Truth can be tested by individual experience. Every Gnostic becomes a renewer of the system whereby he attained his knowledge. Christianity and Buddhism in their Esoteric aspect alone are truly Catholic, as they are based upon the eternal law of re-birth. They can be tested and will be found true. The historical bases serving merely as examples of Esoteric truth. It is therefore assumable that these two systems have a future before them.

The Buddhism we mean is the doctrine of the Buddha; even as true Christianity is the doctrine of the Christ. This doctrine must ever be Catholic, for it appeals to all humanity. The Esoteric system of the Tao-Sse, of the Kabbalists, Brahmins, Sufis, Parsees, may be as divinely spiritual and profoundly religious, but it cannot aim at popularity. Only for the philosophic few can these ideas have any charm; while the leading characteristic of a Catholic system is that it is a poor man's religion, embracing Soul truths, sympathising with the meanest intellects, yet satisfying the greatest minds.

No religion can assimilate universal truths except it be really Catholic in the true sense of the word. The Jews recoil with horror at the idea of embodying a Christian symbol in their faith; the Brahmins will not allow anyone to deviate a hair's breadth from their orthodoxy; and even Mohammedanism in its highest aspect is but a childish system: for a religion based upon the senses cannot be intellectual.

Mohammedanism is so totally opposed to new truths that the Koran forbids all enquiry; and a faithful disciple, Omar, destroyed the largest collection of occult works, the second Alexandrian library.

The heresy of one age is the orthodoxy of another, and the orthodoxy of one age is the heresy of another. The mind is the Soul's purgatory, and urged by the Soul; the mind is continually striving to arrive at Truth, and every little reflection from the Father of Light is considered a great light until it is eclipsed by another and greater. But there are reflections and direct rays, and to the latter we can only attain by following the true Theosophists, and those who know what they knew: know also the Source and Father of all Light and Truth.

Inexact minds will give inexact views and vague descriptions; exact and scientific minds—having philosophic and mathematical training, should they arrive at Divine Illumination—will be better able to define their experience; and their views on phenomena and their noumenal correlatives will bear the test of Reason. It is no doubt for this purpose that mathematics were in most ancient Esoteric Philosophies considered a compulsory course of initiation for neophytes.

Absolute Truth is attainable, as mathematics demonstrate its existence; but it is not in every one's capacity to attain it. This Truth is occult to undeveloped minds, and what is manifest is nearly always error.*

Wherever the Soul would take us, there should we follow; though the dogmatists of belief and unbelief may attempt to terrorize us, the greatest Hell is ignorance of our own Soul. We are of Divine origin; and following the Higher Soul is the only guide to God.

In all things pertaining to the Soul, the Soul only can be the judge, and no one has the right to decree what and how we are to think any more than any one need tell us what and how we are to feel; for the Soul, or *higher conscience* owns no other authority but herself, the absolute Soul.

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* See John viii. 32, 38. Where Jesus promises "to those Jews who believed on him, If ye continue in my word, ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free." *Question*—What is truth? *Answer*—GOD, ADONAI, THE WORD, THE CHRIST, I AM.

Ecstasy is not a condition of absolute truth from whence assertions can be received as infallible dogmas. Such statements may then appear to the mind as absolute, and they may be conditionally true, yet not correct, or correct but not true. Their truth, or their exactitude, depends more or less on the grade of Illumination and the capacity of the Illuminated. It is possible to see a thing, and to be convinced of its truth; but that does not bring it home to the minds of others.

For reason of the inability of even the ablest minds to define the Infinite, Buddhists and Christian Gnostics (as Dionysius Areopagita) have contented themselves in giving no definitions to the Absolute, insisting only that individual experience was necessary in this Divine State or Being.

Revelation, or Divine Manifestation, is the sum-total of the human and Divine. To be truly Divine one must be truly human.

It may be objected: If the human is all error and the Divine all truth, why pursue human studies at all? The reply is: That wherever there is human thought the Divine is latent in it, and we must sift the true from the erroneous human additions, and strengthen our eyes upon the reflections before we can bear to see the All-Light.

Theosophy we have defined as the knowledge of God, and so it is in the strict sense; but to know God we must first know ourselves.

The human Incarnation conditions the Divine. The Divine and human are so indissolubly united that whatever injury the human being does to himself by sin and vice he also inflicts on his better half, the Divine Soul within him.

God lives ever by one Law—Supreme Good—and all the efforts of the higher or undepraved Soul are directed to ray forth the Good, in whatever condition or limitation the Self may have placed her.

The Soul has two means of communication—the senses and the intellect. These two form the balance, by assistance whereof each Soul passes on the cord of material life like pearls on a string. For matter is the magical intention of God, below which it is impossible for Spirit to fall; as moths round a light, do fallen spirits crowd around matter. The Senses, in their rightful state, should express Divine Love; the Intellect, Divine Wisdom, absolute Truth. Every human being has these principles by inheritance from his Divine Source, although they may be so diverted as to be hardly recognizable.

Where the senses are false to the original design of communicating Divine Love they degenerate into animality, to enable Nature to have another instrument in an eventual offspring. Where the intellect deviates from the straight line of Truth, it takes to the vicious circle of *negation*. It cannot affirm anything absolute in opposition to the absolute Truth, it has to content itself with negation. It cannot say, "I see in opposition to the All-seeing eye; I know contrary to the All-Truth;" it is bound to say, "I do not see;" it must deny; it cannot affirm.

When the Soul desires another good than the Absolute wherein she is originally placed, becoming self-willed, she falls from the Divine Centre, and though she cannot break through the Divine circumference, she is at variance with the Divine design, and being no more on the Divine Plane, existence becomes confused to her. It is only on the Divine Plane, as we gradually approach it, that existence is seen as it really is.

God, the Good, is always with the individual Being, although unknown and unowned by the fallen human Spirit. The Divine Essence is latent in the Soul, guarding and guiding her in accordance with an absolute Law—the Law of Good. The Soul is what one makes of her, either animal or Divine. The two are one in different stages of progression. It is the animal Soul which is the Divine Soul—not while she is animalized, but when she is Divinized. To those who are animalized it is the animal Soul; to those who are Divinized it is the Divine Soul. *Demon est Deus inversus, sicut Deus est Demon inversus.* Would you be as God, then decompose the Demon; would you be a Demon then decompose the God.

In the Macrocosmic or Divine State, God's Will, to use an illustration, is as the universal, centrifugal force, sustaining the Spiritual All, while man's self-will forms in a measure centripetal spheres of Individualized Being; these are not inharmonious to the Divine All. In the microcosmic or fallen human state, man's self-will becomes as the centrifugal, and God's Will as the centripetal force. This state is inharmonious, in reverse to the Divine, consequently only temporal, not eternal.

Where Individual Spirit is centrifugal, Universal Soul is centripetal; where Universal Soul is centrifugal, Individual Spirit becomes centripetal. In uniting the human Spirit with Universal Soul it becomes one with the Divine Spirit, and this is Tao, Nirvana, the Absolute, the Kingdom of Heaven, the Supreme Good, our Father and Mother God.

The Soul adapts herself to the Individual Spirit as this Spirit adapts itself to the surroundings of the body, and these modify the manifestations of Thought. Thus the constitution of the physical solar system has its influence upon the Soular system within us; for man, the Microcosm, exactly represents the Macrocosm, or outer world. The limit of his earthly nature is under the dominion of Saturn with his emblematical binding Belt. Jupiter, Lord of the mid-air, is the controller of the Electric force or quickening Principle, the *Jiva* or Vitality of the Buddhists. Mars, again, is the representation of the Astral body, and of blind physical force. Whilst softer Venus presides over the passional consciousness, and fittingly occupies the *fourth* plane at the centre of the cross, or conjunction of the male and female, (see coloured plate at page 154), from whence spring the issues of *life* and *death*, as man is borne upwards or earthwards, symbolised by generation and re-generation.

Mercury, nearer to the Sun, the Lord of Life, acts the part of mediator between the higher human Soul above and the Astral, passional, and mundane circumference. Its sphere is intellectual rather than Spiritual, and corresponds to the *fifth* principle, *Manas*, or Human Soul, for on this fifth plane the Microcosmic animal Soul becomes fully humanised and attains its first responsible degree, being animated by the instinctive and seeing principle. Mercurial knowledges are, however, objective and speculative; they are of the reasoning mind, not of the Spiritual Soul; and mind, even in its loftiest mode, ranks lower than Intuition, which is the Divine consciousness, or conscience of the Soul, the moonlight refraction of the Divine Nature. It is only at the *sixth* stage that the awakened Soul becomes fully Spiritualised and attains the consummation of conscious life in this its highest degree.

The early Hermetic and mystic writers gave evidence, therefore, of profound occult knowledge, in teaching that the Moon (or, as they considered her, the sixth planet) holds dominion over the province of the intellect or brain, the seat of Divine Wisdom, which is the distinctively human property of the Microcosm. Inasmuch as the Moon is reflective of the light of the greater luminary, the Sun God, the Lord of Day, does she fittingly represent the Divine Wisdom, the Mother, or feminine principle, as the Sun represents the *Atma* or *seventh* Principle, at once the head of the solar as of the Soular system.

The physical conditions affecting us while incarnate in this system of the Universal, influence and modulate the communications of the Soul and form a mental world that cannot be regarded as final for all eternity. The faculties we have here may but faintly indicate the infinite expressions and combinations of Thought that can only be seen in the Absolute Soul-state. "But wherever a being may be who is consciously living in the Divine Spirit, whether embodied or disembodied, knowing the Absolute, living in continual communion with God, his existence is one of supreme felicity; whereas those persisting in the unregenerate state, live in darkness and misery and perish as the beasts."

SOUL.

Man in another life, according to Swedenborg, becomes the perfect image of his inward thoughts and intention. Man may know whether he is amongst the infernal or angelic spirits; if he intendeth evil to his neighbour, thinking nothing but evil concerning him, and actually doing evil when it is in his power, and finding delight therein, he is then amongst the infernals, and becometh also himself an infernal in another life; but if he intendeth good to his neighbour, and thinketh nothing but good concerning him, and actually doeth good when it is in his power, he is then amongst the angelic, and becometh himself also as an angel in another life. This is the characteristic mark or test by which everyone may discover his true state and quality, and according to which he ought to examine himself. (*Arc.* 1680.)

The Spiritual Body is far more perfect and expressive than the physical. Thought forms the Body physically and psychically. The Soul that builds up and animates the physical clod, when working in its own psychic matter produces accordingly a far more wonderful though possibly a more simple form. The Spiritual Body is built and grows according to psychic law by our life and thoughts. As our thoughts are pure or impure, as our actions are noble or ignoble, so will the Soul express them in the Spiritual form.

These are not vain words but Truths, teaching us the necessity of living in accordance with Absolute Reason and Justice; for what we are in our thoughts we are in the Spirit, and in the Spirit we shall be for ever. Decide therefore, *now*, what you will be; if an Angel of Light, then strive to *be* one, or else you may become a Demon of Darkness.

The view taken in *Esoteric Buddhism* of Devachan and Avitchi, or the continuance by good or evil, is no doubt true; for there is no middle state in Spirit, and every one becomes irresistibly attracted to his own sphere to which he has chained himself by his own thoughts. There is only one path of escape, the path of the Law unto Nirvana, the Absolute Good.

The spiritual state, which according to the cultivated inclination and development of the individual soul, is more or less Divine, or more or less Demonic, can, in more decided stages of existence, become in a measure all-embracing, or all-repelling. In this mundane sphere, which may be designated a school of experience, as it is a stage of transition, there appears to be no good unmixed with evil, nor evil that in some measure, however small, is not tinged with good.

As the body is built up of material food, so is the Soul built up of its loves; wherefore we should be as careful of our love as of our food. As material food supports or destroys the body, so does the spiritual food, our love, and all we nourish it with, elevate or degrade the Soul to be a temple of the Most High, or a haunt for impure demons.

Love can only be absolute where it is illimitable, and that is only possible in a spiritual sense; for even with the best, or rather with the worst intentions, physical lust must have its limits. Therefore, the task is, to separate love from that which it is not, and Love, who by the Greek Hermetists was designated as the most ancient of Gods, when allowed to rule absolutely in spirit and in truth, becomes our very guide, and Plato observes, that for the apprehension of the Divine "a better assistant than love cannot be obtained."

The mind is the product of the Soul. Strive to have a clean, immaculate mind that neither soils or can be soiled: with such a mind one can be temptation proof, while without it even the elect may fall.

Touch not, taste not, think not, that which is impure, and which you in your sane mind must know to be impure. Every wrongful act is carried on under an impulse of insanity, which will increase and become only more incurable as it is repeated; for frequency creates a habit and habit becomes a second nature, and when once evil is as a natural state it is inconceivably difficult to return to that state of absolute purity and reason wherein abideth the life of the Divine Soul, the Spirit of the Divine, or the Divine Spirit.

What the volition impresses upon the involitional, the latter receives, and, becoming depraved, will reproduce and impel the volition to continue; and this is the origin of habit, good or bad.

All these things whereof we write, have for you no existence until you become conscious, and they then exist in your soul. When once one has had a mystic experience it becomes next to impossible to make those who are not on our plane understand our views; and this was the chief reason why Hermetic Language was universally instituted by Adepts. The Neophyte had to place himself patiently under guidance; and unless you place yourself under guidance of your own Higher soul with a pure intention and fervent prayer, neither this nor any theosophic book can afford you spiritual benefit; for all these things have no existence until they are experienced and known.

As there are grades and degrees of goodness, purity, and holiness so also are there layers and strata of wickedness, impurity, and perversity. A sudden conversion is not always, as in the case of St. Paul, an entire conversion; for we carry our deeds with us, and as long as we have not a holy horror of evil our holiness is not real. Many assume to be in a state of grace who are not even on the way to grace. In the unregenerate state there are many delusive, self-satisfactory stages which are directly opposed to a truly Divine state.

A Spiritual Guide is absolutely requisite on the path to Perfection. This guide is not a human being, nor a spirit-guide, but the Divine Soul within us—that is, our better half, our Higher Self, and we should place ourselves unreservedly under her guidance. Let us give *her* a name, and call *her* at once THE INTUITION.

The Intuition of the Soul is the most precious of our possessions. Those who have attained to Soul-Knowledge value that Gnosis above all mundane things. Thus Spiritual Adepts naturally undervalue an Adeptship of a physical nature, and even deny its existence. Physical Adepts decry Spiritual Adeptship, and as they have not yet attained unto its perception, they pronounce it to be sophistry, and, reversing the truth, assert the physical to be the base of the spiritual.

Although a physical Adept may ridicule the existence of Spiritual Alchemy, and a spiritual Adept may deny the possibility of a material Philosopher's Stone, we are not in position to decide in either direction, for we want facts, not assertions. We must, however, admit that the facts for a *spiritual* interpretation are within the reach of everyone; while those who seek the physical plane have as yet offered very little evidence for their pretensions and belief.

What Mathematics are to Science is Gnosis to Theosophy, and should be in true Religion the Divine Union. These are but different expressions for one and the same psychic principle and occult manifestation of Absolute Truth.

Viewed as Eternity, Infinity, Truth, Love, Power, Good, and other Sephirotic abstractions, the Absolute is reflected in its indivisible attributes. In order to know what the Absolute is, it should be either mentally conceived, spiritually seen, or psychically experienced; and although the latter may from a phenomenal standpoint be considered more convincing, the former experiences are noumenally not less valuable.

Science, Religion, Art, and Philosophy, are indirect paths to the fountain of existence. The Theosophist alone, even above these, finds the direct path whereby he consciously, willingly, and knowingly, returns to the one absolute Being, and by his re-birth becomes united and at one with God. Until experienced by his essence, God, the Absolute, can only be beheld, conceived, and known, by his Divine attributes, and these can only be known by being reflected within us; wherefore, to know God, we must become God-like. As we ascend to the Divine, God becomes more manifest to us; and although those who have ascended to the apex of their Being may reveal the Divine Nature to us, it is not God who is more active at one time and less active at another, but that the cyclic spiritual waves and Divine manifestations are due to an eternal law, showing the Kingdom of Heaven to be ever attainable.

God saves no one, and condemns no one; we save or condemn ourselves by our own conduct. God is passive, and allows full play to free-will. It is because God is Infinite Good that free-will is free to run into evil, that we may err and repent; for there is but one good, and that is God; but if the good were to annihilate all attempts at evil, it would be absolute force, and there would be no good in it.

The unregenerate will call that good which agrees with their love, and evil that which they do not like; but such is not real good, nor real evil, for having depraved their intuitions they are not able to know the real from the unreal. That which is absolute Good is God; to be at one with the Absolute one must be absolutely good. God loves all equally; but if we close our hearts against Him; and if we do not hearken to, and learn to know, Him, how can we love Him? We should ever bear in mind that Good is that which is in accordance with our highest light. If it is true that what may seem good to a man to-day may seem evil to-morrow—good being relative as well as absolute —it is our highest light at the time being which must ever guide us higher and higher.

We would advise all inquirers into Theosophy to learn to *know* God; to search for Him in a pure and loving spirit; to search in truth and faith; and to search without fear or doubt. Uproot fear and doubt from your heart, and plant in their stead faith and love. Trust to God, and God will trust you.

Are we not living, conscious, and intelligent beings; and would the parts be living if the whole were dead? We are parts of the living God, and if we find not God within us, creation may speak in vain. Life is within us as the perfume in the flower; life is eternal; even the life we *are* is an Atom of God.

INFINITY.

Infinity is indeed without and within us, and we can no more fathom the abyss of Matter than we are able to sound the depths of Thought. The most powerful telescopes which show us the infinity of the vast, as the microscopes of highest power which reveal to us the infinitude of the minute, do but aid us to grope our way toward a faint comprehension of that phase of Thought whereof Matter is but a phenomenal manifestation, and there is no Instrument invented that will help us to delve into those abysmal depths of our Being, the world of Thought within us.

Nothing raises the mind from its grovelling senses so much as a contemplation of the starry heavens. There at least we obtain a glimpse of one of the Manifestations of the Infinite, and we are able to form a faint concept of Eternity when no longer bound by the fetters of gross Matter. Eternal and Eternally free in conscious identity, resting on the bosom of the Omnipotent, Thought alone is Being, and Matter ruled by Force its obedient slave.

Let us here accept the assistance of one who has spent his life in contemplating the eternal glory of the heavens, which have ever been eloquent to him of the Omnipotence and Omnipresence of God. Let us endeavour to obtain a view of the marvels of the Universe through the telescope of the eminent and celebrated French Astronomer, Camille Flammarion, who, with his vivid thought and brilliant pen will aid us, even through a translation, to scale the dizzy heights, and, when we return with him to the earth we think so solid and material, will convince us of the immateriality of all that surrounds us upon it.

" STARS AND ATOMS."

"Last night, in the silence of the midnight hour, I observed with the telescope a little fixed star lost in the multitude of bright celestial objects, a pale star of the seventh magnitude, separated from us by an almost immeasurable distance—which, however, we are able to traverse—and my thoughts fixed themselves on that little star, which is not even visible to the naked eye. I reflected that we count eighteen stars of the first magnitude, sixty of the second, a hundred and eighty-two of the third, five hundred and thirty of the fourth, six hundred of the fifth, and four thousand eight hundred of the sixth (which gives a sum total of about seven thousand stars visible to the naked eye); and that the stars of the seventh magnitude, to which belongs the one that I observed, are calculated to number thirteen thousand, those of the eighth magnitude are computed at forty thousand, that the sum total of stars of the first ten magnitudes brings us to the number of five hundred and sixty thousand, that of the first twelve magnitudes gives more than four millions of stars, and they exceed forty millions when we reach the fifteenth magnitude.

"Without losing myself in the profundity of infinite perspectives, I attached myself in thought, to that little star of the seventh magnitude in the constellation of the Great Bear, which never descends below the horizon of Paris, and which we can observe every night in the year, and I remembered that it shines eighty-five *trillions* of leagues from here, a distance for which a flash of lightning, travelling at the constant swiftness of a hundred and twenty kilometres per hour, would require not less than three hundred and twenty-five millions of years to traverse."

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"Transported to that distance, our own dazzling sun would have lost its splendour and its glory. Not only would it not be visible to the naked eye, and absent in the brilliancy of the starry night, but it would be much inferior in brightness to the star of the seventh order of which I speak, and could only be traced by the most minute telescopic research. This little star, which is but a brilliant point punctured upon the black midnight heavens, is, in reality, an immense and colossal sun, far more considerable than the one upon whose rays the life of the earth depends. This, our sun, is already three hundred and eighty-four thousand times weightier than the earth, and a million two hundred and eighty-five thousand times more voluminous. Allowing to the little star a weight of more than a million times that of our planet, and a volume equal to several millions of united earths, we certainly still remain far below the truth."

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"These thoughts, occasioned by the sight of that little star, overlooked in the midst of the multiude of its kind, transport us into the presence of the formidable realities of the constitution of the universe, yet do not, however, represent the most interesting aspect of our contemplation. It is a singular fact, unknown to all ancient philosophers, fantastic, and hardly conceivable even now to the thoughtful mind which seeks to comprehend it in its importance: that these suns of infinity, far from being fixed as they appear to be on account of their immense distance, are rushing through space with an inconceivable swiftness: the star in question, among others, flies through the immensity of space at the daily rate *of thirty millions of kilometres.*

"Yes, seven million leagues per day! Two milliards five hundred and ninety million leagues per year! and, nevertheless, in ten years, in fifty years, in a hundred years, this star appears to us not to have moved in the heavens! The swiftness of a cannon-ball shot forth from our most powerful guns does not exceed seven hundred metres per second, and the velocity of that star is above three hundred and twenty thousand: it will be seen that the swiftness of the star surpasses that of the ball in a proportion of four hundred and fifty-five to one! Can the most audacious imagination conceive such a flight? . . .

"The star would pass in five days and some hours through the distance of thirty-seven million leagues that separate us from the sun, a distance which a cannon-ball would take seven years to traverse. It will be seen that such a velocity borders on the marvellous, and yet it is an established fact, has been measured by the most delicate and precise operations, and cannot be less than the numbers we have given."

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"This swiftness is a symbol, and under that head I would here present it. *All the stars are animated with analogous motion*, more or less rapid; and not only the stars—each of which is a sun, and the majority of which must be centres of planetary systems, sources of light, heat, and harmony, around which gravitate habitable earths, abodes, actual, past, or future, for various existences of terrestrial beings—not only, I say, are all the stars thus hurled through the immensity of space, but also all the planets, all the satellites, all the worlds, all the systems, all that exists in creation.

"The earth rushes around the sun with a daily velocity of six hundred and forty-three thousand leagues, turning at the same time upon its own axis of rotation with eleven different kinds of motion, more light and mobile than a child's toy balloon floating in the air, influenced by the various attractions of the nearest stars, a veritable plaything of the cosmic forces that carry us all along in the immense vortex. The moon revolves around the earth, disturbing us constantly in our course, and making us submit to various inflections. The sun carries us along with all its cortège towards the constellation of Hercules; and yet, since her existence, the earth never yet passed twice over the same road, describing not closed ellipses, but coursing through space in interminable spirals. The suns nearest to ours travel with their systems towards various directions. Constellations dislodge themselves from age to age, each star having its own motion, by virtue of which the changing figure of the heavens incessantly modifies itself: and thus everything in perpetual movement flies, circulates, and precipitates itself with vertiginous velocity towards an unknown and never-attained goal.

"This is not a romance or dream of pure contemplation, a view outside of ourselves: it is our own actual and unavoidable history. Within an hour each one of us, reader and writer, rich and poor, learned and ignorant, young and aged, whether we sleep or wake, within an hour each one of us has passed through the heavens by an invisible route of more than a hundred thousand kilometres, for our planet describes not less than a hundred and sixteen million leagues annually in its sole revolution around the sun;

and a centenarian will have traced through space a track of more than twelve milliard leagues. But it is found that these velocities are *the very condition* of the stability of the universe: the stars, the earth, planets, worlds, suns, stellar systems, star-clusters, milky-ways, distant universes, all sustain themselves by the mutual equilibrium of their reciprocal attraction; they are all *placed upon the void*, and maintain themselves in their ideal orbits, as they revolve with sufficient swiftness to create a centrifugal force equal and contrary to the attraction that draws them, in such wise that they remain in unstable but perpetual equilibrium.

"Formerly, people were in doubt, and we cannot wonder at it, about the firmness of the foundations of the world; for before the isolation of our planet in space and its motion around the sun had been demonstrated, it appeared indispensable to accord to the earth an undisturbed basis, and to fix it upon infinite roots. But as the stars rise, set, and pass below the earth, these foundations, without which the reflective mind, ever desirous of ascertaining the truth, would not be satisfied, had to be renounced, as it was absolutely impossible to conceive of a material pillar, of ever so vast dimensions, be it of the diameter of the earth, and resting in the infinite, even as little as we can admit the existence of a stick having but one end. However deep the mind may descend towards the base of this material pillar it arrives at a final point, the void alone can be infinite, and from thence the said pillar no more serves us, as it rests itself without support. The modern concept of dynamism, opposed to the ancient and vulgar idea of matter, has to-day a philosophic bearing unprecedented in the entire history of the sciences. *It teaches, proves, and convinces us, beyond a doubt, that the material, visible, palpable universe rests on the invisible, the immaterial, the imponderable force.*

"This is a fact against which the vulgar and deceitful testimony of the senses will never again prevail. The earth, which was thought firm at the base of creation, is not supported by anything material, but by invisible force. The void extends below and above the earth, to the right as to the left, and into infinity in all directions. It is the solar attraction that supports her—attraction and motion. It is the same with all the worlds, with all the stars, with all that composes the universe, in the internal constitution of bodies as also in the sideral all. Let us dwell for a moment on some details."

* * *

"Behold a strong iron rafter, such as is generally employed at present in architectural constructions. It is placed on the void, at a height of ten metres, upon two walls, upon which rest its two ends. It is 'solid,' certainly. On its centre a weight of a thousand, two thousand, ten thousand kilogrammes has been placed, and it does not even feel this enormous weight; it is with difficulty that an imperceptible bending can be shown with the level.

"For all that, this rafter is composed of molecules which do not touch each other—molecules which are in perpetual vibration, and which expand under the influence of heat, and contract under the influence of cold. Recently, in the full sun, it attained a temperature of sixty degrees (Celsius); last winter it was below zero. In its first condition it is seven millimetres longer than in the second, and its molecules can by greater heat be still more expanded. Tell me, now, what constitutes the solidity of that bar of iron? Its material atoms? Certainly not, for they do not touch one another. The solidity dwells in the molecular attraction—that is to say, in an immaterial force.

"It has been calculated that there are not less than eight sextillion atoms, say eight thousand milliards of milliards in the head of a pin, and that these atoms are separated one from another by distances incomparably greater than are their dimensions; these dimensions on the other hand reduce themselves to the infinitely little. If one would count the number of these atoms contained in a pin's head, by detaching in thought a milliard every second one would require to continue this operation during two hundred and fifty-three thousand years to complete the enumeration.

"By studies on molecular action it has been calculated that in the most minute drop of water, such as could hang on to the point of a pin, a drop invisible to the naked eye, measuring a thousandth part of a millimetre cube, there are more than two hundred and twenty-five thousand millions of molecules.

"Absolutely speaking, solid solidity does not exist. Let us take into our hands a heavy iron ball. This ball is composed of invisible non-contiguous molecules, which again are composed of non-contiguous atoms. The continuity that the surface of this iron ball appears to have, and its apparent solidity, are thus pure illusions. For the mind that would analyse its internal structure, it would seem as a vortex of flies, reminding one of those motes that float in the sunbeam on a hot summer's day.

"Studies of molecular physics have brought us to admit that in a cube centimetre of air the molecules that compose it do not occupy more than a third part of the cube millimetre; that is to say, the three-thousandth part of the total apparent volume.

"All these molecules, all these atoms, are in the same perpetual *motion* as are the worlds in space; and the structure of bodies is organized by invisible force. In hydrogen, at normal temperature and pressure, each molecule has a swiftness of translation, vibration, and circulation of two kilometres per second.

"Every body, organic or inorganic, air, water, plant, animal, man, is thus formed of molecules in motion.

"Our very body is no more solid than the rest. Each globule of our blood is as a world (and we have thereof five millions to the cube millimetre); all circulating continuously, without stopping or resting, in our arteries, veins, flesh, brains; all moves, all precipitates itself in a vital vortex proportionately as rapid as the celestial bodies in space. Molecule by molecule our brains, our skull, our nerves, our entire flesh renews itself without rest, and so rapidly that in a few months our whole body is entirely changed. The analysis of bodies, organic as well as inorganic, thus brings us into the presence of atomic motion ruled by forces, and the infinitely minute speaks to us the same language as the infinitely vast."

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"The title of 'Materialist,' borne still to-day by men who do not see beyond the vulgar appearance of things, will soon not be otherwise considered by the thinker than as a superanuated expression, and one without meaning. The visible universe is not at all what it appears to our senses; and it is the invisible universe that constitutes the essence and support of the creation. In fact, *this visible universe is composed of invisible non-contiguous atoms; it rests on the void,* and the ruling forces themselves are immaterial and invisible. Seek matter, and you will not find it; it is a mirage that recedes in the ratio as you advance; it is a shadow that vanishes each time you think to seize it. It is not so with *force*, the dynamic element; it is the invisible and imponderable force that we find in the last analyses, and it is force that represents the base, the support and very essence of the universe.

"In the profound silence of night all moves, borne along by a breath divine. In these hours of tranquil concentration, do we not hear the voice of the Infinite? Night is the state of immense space; and we have the day during a half rotation of the earth, only because we dwell in the immediate vicinity of a star. Night fills all, but it is not darkness, it is the soft light emanating from millions of stars. Then we can best feel how all is in vibration. The motions of every atom, on earth and in heaven, are the mathematical result of all the ethereal modulations that affect it at the time from the abysses of infinite space. The moon attracts the earth, the earth attracts her sisters the planets; these solicit and call her; the stars attract the sun, and like those particles of dust that we see oscillate and vibrating in a ray of sunlight, do all the worlds in the universe unto infinity glide, turn, circulate, fly, vibrate, and palpitate on the bosom of the illimitable void. A geometer dared to say, that with a motion of the hand he disturbed the moon in her course. This was giving an imaginative expression of the extreme mobility of things, and showing that the most feeble disturbance of a centre of gravity has its reaction at a distance. When the moon passes overhead, the whole earth is drawn, the waters in the ocean are displaced, and each one of us weighs somewhat less than when the moon is on the horizon (the difference is about eighteen milligrammes). When Venus passes at ten million leagues from here, when Jupiter passes at a hundred and fifty million leagues, one and the other displace the whole earth from her normal position.

"Have you ever approached a piece of iron to a freely-suspended magnetised needle? What a marvellous spectacle is this mobility, these palpitations, this misdirecting of the needle, under the influence of an apparently inert object, and which acts upon it at a distance! We observe a compass at the bottom of a hermetically-sealed cellar: a regiment of soldiers passes along an adjoining row, and the compass becomes agitated, influenced at a distance by their steel bayonets. Does an aurora borealis occur in Sweden? the compass in Paris feels it What do I say! The fluctuations of the magnetic needle are in relation with the spots and eruptions of the sun! Modern physics, or the natural philosophy of the present day is a proclamation of the invisible Universe."

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"It is under this modern aspect of science that it appeared to me interesting to contemplate the visible Universe to-day, and to invite those of my readers to this contemplation who like to dwell sometimes on profound truths. Stars and atoms place us in the presence of an harmonious immensity, an immense harmony. Those who but see the orchestra without hearing any sounds are deaf. Through the visible Universe our mind must feel the presence of an invisible Universe, wherein we are placed. All that we see is but an appearance: *the real is the invisible* force, the energy, that moves all, carries all, in the infinite and in the eternal.

"In reality, we are indeed in infinity and in eternity. The little star we spoke of above, the colossal sun surpassing the earth by more than a million times its volume, at such a distance that a ray of lightning would not require less than three hundred and twenty-five millions of years to reach us, is, notwithstanding all that, one of our neighbouring stars. We can go beyond the same distance, go further still, ever further, and travel with any amount of swiftness, during any number of ages, towards any direction of the heavens, without ever approaching any termination, *without ever advancing a single step;* the centre being everywhere, the circumference nowhere, and even Eternity cannot suffice to overcome Infinity."

One Spirit fills Immensity. It is the Spirit of God, that nothing limits, nothing divides; which is all, in all, and everywhere. Whose life is the life of the Universe, and who controls and governs all things by His indwelling presence. Who holds the mighty suns in their courses, and pervades and vitalizes every atom on the earth.

God is our All; the All is not our God. God is everything; but everything is not God. Although we were to sum up all existences, the total would not be God; though we were to deduct all existences, there would be no diminution to the fulness of God. The Divine Being wears all things as a veil, yet would be in unabated glory without them; for the veil does not make the Divine Being, but the Divine Being makes the veil.

The Path.

All that lives thinks; all that thinks lives. All Life is Thought; all Thought is Life. Wherever Thought is, there must God be; wherever God is, there must Thought be. Wherever God is, there must He be known; known, yet unknown; beheld, yet uncomprehended; for God is Life, and Thought—*Being*; and this Being, which is Thought, is the Light that shines in the darkness of the sensual mind, and the darkness comprehendeth it not. God is not only Life and Thought, but Power, Justice, Love; and being all this in its absolute potentiality, God only is absolute, and to become absolute we must become God-like.

Evil and error are unprincipled perversions of Good and Truth. Every conceivable wrong and error is possible; every possible falsehood and delusion can have a term of existence; but Truth alone is Eternal, for truth alone is Good. There is no eternal evil, and no principle of evil, except the eternal possibility of evil; for evil results only from a wilful or ignorant perversion of Good, and to know the Good is to know God; to know Truth is to know the Absolute Wisdom that with absolute Power sustains the All by an Absolute

Justice, which is only an expression of absolute Love. This idea has been well formulated by a recent writer:

> "Absolute Wisdom is Absolute Power, Absolute Power is Absolute Justice, Absolute Justice is Absolute Love. This is the square of the Absolute."

We can only approach God by Thought, Justice, and Love; this triune path corresponds to our Trinity of Body, Soul, and Spirit. By Thought we discern good from evil, the reasonable from the unreasonable, the intellectual from the sensual. Thought has also built up the Body by laws of absolute Justice and Love. The Soul's voice, Intuition, when allowed and encouraged to speak, will teach us the Law of Justice to all creation; that the destruction of animal life for mere pastime and amusement is wrong and unlawful; that too much flesh food corrupts Body and Soul, and while it imparts disease to the former, lastingly cripples and contaminates the latter. After we have followed the path of Truth and Justice, the Spirit of Charity, of Divine Love, the Divine Spirit will then guide us further on in the path of Divine Union, until becoming at one with God, the Divine Being will become manifested in and within us.

But how remote Divine Love is to most beings here below! When sensual lust speaks they are fully alive; but when Divine Love, Love of the Divine, pleads, they are dead unto it.

Absolute Power is beyond man; he can only behold it in God, but he cannot compete with or controvert the one absolute Divine design. Nature can only be improved by the Art of the Adepts working according to Divine Law and Knowledge of the Law; but all other attempts to improve Nature are failures. Neither embodied nor disembodied being can become a permanent anti-god; for even the most powerful demon, who by wrongful use of his knowledge and power may have enslaved a world or a system of worlds (if such a thing were possible), would nevertheless have his term and cannot rule for ever. Who rules by force shall perish by force, unless his force is subject to the Law of absolute Love and Justice which alone is Eternal.

The Divine attributes we have just seen set forth as a quaternity; but God may have an infinitude of attributes which we in our finite state are incapable of even mentally conceiving. The Divine Mediator, the son of man (and of woman) is the outpouring of God; but the stay of the Divine with us is too brief to teach us all things. The Divine Thought comes and goes, and in it are all things comprised as in a nutshell. Its origin we know not, we call it Divine; others grovel in protoplasm and seek its origin in mud. Like likes Like.

The Direct way to God is Love, for Love is the highest Divine quality we are capable of knowing. The Supreme Law of Divine Justice is but begotten of Divine Love; therefore is love the *fulfilling* of the Law. To be for ever united, and never separated from the Divine; to live ever in the Divine Presence and do no act unworthy of being done with full consciousness of Eternity; to be in harmony with the All-Father and All-Mother, and to work with all our being in accordance to the Divine Design of the Supreme Reason—this is the pathway of Truth, the Perfect Way to Divine Union.

Assuredly our Salvation *is*, and it is the aim and end we all are ultimately destined for; but what a vast time will some be on the way who believe in unbelief, and to whom the vagaries of self-will serve as the guiding influence.

There are the realms of physical and human nature, and Law that gradually educate us for the Divine and Eternal Inheritance; but there are also the realms of Spiritual and Divine Nature and Grace, whereby God becomes manifested unto and in us. "The good and contemplative became so through three things; and these are Nature, Habit, and Reason." *Aristot. Polit. VII.* These three form the Path unto Perfection.

Our aim and end is to live in God, and be conscious parts of his Divine Being. The centre of God in us is in the involitional life and growth that in agnostic verbiage is misnamed "the Unconscious." Yet there lies latent within us a seed of Infinity that only wants the conditions of a rightful life to become manifested. The Divine Wisdom is the voice of our unperverted Intuition. The mind then becomes an auditor to the Xenos or Guest that at times honours her with a visit, and this Xenos, or Guest (see Plato's Symposium), is the Logos, the Divine Word. The Symposium, as indeed most of Plato's genuine writings when esoterically interpreted, are found to be full of deepest, or most occult Wisdom.

Let us follow the Logic of Nature before we attempt to be at one with the Divine. Where Nature revolts, be assured Nature has Reason on her side, and if you attempt to improve her, you will only end in destruction.

From earliest youth, good and evil is imparted to us in such mixed doses that it requires earnest searching to separate truth from error, Divine from demonic. Solemn platitudes are droned into our ears, and we are educated to call them Divine Truths until Truth itself becomes hateful to us.

Misused, miseducated, misunderstood from his youth, man in turn retaliates on his fellows his own experience, and adds to it what his ignorance or viciousness suggests, doing his best to make a Hell upon earth.

In the unregenerate state man's highest aspiration is concentred upon Self, and the Religion of the unregenerate is one where selfishness rules supreme. The Religions hitherto instituted have been man-made Religions. Man made his creed, and forced it upon Woman, and that creed nearly always ignored the most noble sentiments, feelings, and aspirations of Woman, and crushed her whole being into the dust.

If the Religion of the future is not to become merely a shadow or reflection of the past, but is to be a life-giving reality, Woman, who mystically represents the Soul, will have to be taken into the fullest consideration, and her aspirations, far from being allowed through ignorance to be misdirected to vanity and vexation of spirit, should, by Divine Science, be rightly guided to the Eternal reality of Divine Love, of which Woman is a by far better medium and more true exponent than Man. And although in the Divine State all beings are in a measure equal, in the human state Woman is naturally nearer to God than Man. She is more intuitional, and her intuitions are, on the average, less depraved; and although her mind, by millenniums of masculine brutality, has been kept in a less developed state, her will being by that very reason less active, she has less to unlearn, is nearer to the Divine Involitional Principle, and is also consequently more courageous than Man.

We venture to assert that had *men* been compelled ever since this world's history began to submit to the disadvantages women have had to battle through, they would be far lower in the scale of humanity than they have forced their weaker sisters to be.

Why should the affections be considered as diabolical temptations that are to be spurned by those who strive for a Divine Life? It is this fallacy, not to call it an outrageous falsehood, that makes Religious Systems untrue, as they show an utter disregard for the natural feelings implanted in the human being, and calculated to raise him to heights supernal when wisely directed.

NIRVANA, THE END.

God becomes spontaneously manifested when man is in unison with God. When man reaches the apex of his being, his Sabbath or 7th State, he sounds the Divine octave, and another, the Divine Being, resounds in him. Man, to become a Medium for the Highest, must *be* the Highest.

Alas! how have men lost their faculties and powers, and become degenerate, since they first turned away from God! Communion with the Highest can now only be accomplished by the elevation of the Soul, the feminine and higher principle in man, to its rightful and inherent position.

In his fallen state, or state of separation, man is but a demon. The human-demonic is throughout existence where the Divine is not, and the Divine is where the demon is not. But as God is the Soul and essence of men, God, although unknown and unseen, permeates all. There is but one *I Am*, and that is God; when we are in God, then only have we our real and eternal Being; while when dissevered from God we are in an unreal and phantom state. By Divine aspiration we burst the shell of the demon and become God. Then may we say, "The Father and I are one." Yea, in full identity, and above the individual Being, the Soul becomes consciously merged and united with the manifested Divine Spirit. This is figured in Scripture under the allegory of the marriage of the King's son. The Soul is then united to Spirit, and becomes one with the Divine Spirit; but while the Divine Soul is undeveloped and in the natural or demonic state, in which we see nearly all mankind around us, it is but the Soul of the Animal, or Animal Soul, the *Anima bruta*, represented in the plate in our chapter on Esoteric Buddhism, by which each may clearly ascertain his own whereabouts on the steps of the Divine ladder.

There are not, however, as some seem to think, two Souls—an animal Soul and a Divine Soul—the two are one and the same, but in two stages of progression and development; or rather in *three*, as taught in Esoteric Buddhism, for the Animal Soul must be humanised before it can attain to the Divine State.

While the demonic will and sensual mentality is manifest the Divine Soul is latent, but when the Divine Soul is permitted to develop and manifest herself in full consciousness it is the Eternal Memory which reads the past, present, and future as a scroll, and what seers and mediums believe to read in the Astral light they really behold through a glimpse of their own Soul.

Infinity is internal and not external; it is in the Soul and not in Space. Within us lies true Infinity, without is but the reflection. But only those who have had a flash of Soul-Power will know and comprehend that at the moment of physical death physical conditions also cease and a new state of existence bursts upon the renascent Being. Matter *then* has no existence: Spirit is all, and Soul is omnipotent.

Those who rule by force are ruled and perish by force; for when a greater force is brought to bear upon them, how can they avoid destruction? Those who rule by love, by love shall be saved, and their love shall be eternal life, for their life is love eternal. All evil aims at the destruction of life, but good strives to develop, preserve, and regenerate the living Soul into eternal Being.

To live in God it is not necessary to be first deprived of the physical body, for the visible body is not the form we shall wear in Eternity. There is an invisible because Spiritual body on which the material body is daily built up, and an aura that we gather around us by our acts, inclinations, and thoughts; and when we consider that "man in a future life becomes the image of his thoughts," we shall find that the Dragon which has to be slain by Michael the Ruler of the New Dispensation is the bent of perverted sensualism which the unregenerate mind inclines to, and which is the real hindrance and obstacle to the higher birth. The interpretation of the name of the Angel of the Sun, Michael, is this: "*Who is like unto God;*" and it is the manifestation of the God-like being, (*like unto God*) that slays the Dragon, who is the Demon of grossness and materiality.

We hope to have sufficiently demonstrated, in this our earnest enquiry into the Divine Wisdom underlying all the Religions of Humanity, that true THEOSOPHY is Universal, and not merely a momentary and ephemeral mystic craze, or badge of a party, but that it is and has ever been the highest, because truest, aspiration of the human Soul, and its Secret or Great Arcanum is the Union of God and Man. This is the great underlying Truth concealed in all Religions under the outward veil of the Letter. This Life-giving Truth is the First and the Last, the Alpha and Omega, of all Wisdom, who was, and is, and is to come *in all* Humanity, which glorious Truth is declared and made known to all nations, in this the Fulness of Time, by the study of the DIVINE WISDOM or Universal Theosophy.

> "When, after an earthly pilgrimage of many centuries, the wandering Jew, prototype of unbelieving man, shall return at length to Jerusalem, he will find himself in the midst of a great multitude assembled from every quarter of the world, and gathered around an altar on Mount Moriah. He will look at the officiating priest, and his eyes will overflow with tears as he will exclaim: ''*Tis He!*' and fall down at his feet. He will regard the holy offering which the pontiff raises above the heads of the crowd, and with a deep drawn sigh he will again exclaim: ''*Tis He!*' and will worship Him the second time. He will look around on the multitude as far as his eyes can reach, and recognize Him in each one of his brother men, and will cry with a sob, ''*Tis He* again! *He* is present in all! '*Tis He* everywhere! 'Tis always *He!*' and he will sink down in the deepest adoration. At length he will look into the depths of his own being, and then his heart will melt with love and gratitude, for he will at last discover *Him* in his own heart. His selfhood will have become transmuted into that of the Christ, and the work of regeneration will be finished."

END.

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